

P.
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RED SEAL COMICS

NO. 18
10¢

HARRY A. CHESLER
WORLD'S
Greatest
COMICS





**WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM**

THE

Black DWARF



Riding on the crest of a crime wave, chuckling with menacing mirth and brandishing a knife that bears countless notches-- the beggar king comes to town! Result:- the police go on a diet of black coffee and fingernails while the **Black Dwarf** and his squad of ex-crooks defy blind men's bludgeons and cripples' canes to reach a savage showdown with the beggars' bloody monarch!

A jealous underworld makes life dangerous for a beggar king in Chicago--

HEY! DON'T CLOSE THAT GATE, YOU! I'VE GOT TO CATCH THAT TRAIN!



HOLD YOUR HOSSES, KING! YOU'RE GETTING A FREE RIDE TO JOLIET PRISON, COURTESY OF THE CHICAGO POLICE!



YOU'RE BUCKING FOR A SLOW RIDE IN A HEARSE, FLATFOOT! NEW YORK'S MY DESTINATION!



Twenty minutes later, police teletypes flash a "Wanted for Murder" on the beggar king.

FORT WAYNE DETECTIVES REQUESTED TO BOARD AND SEARCH TRAIN! CAUTION-- KILLER IS POWERFULLY BUILT AND EXTREMELY TREACHEROUS!



But outside Gary, Indiana...

AH, NOW TO RIDE IN STYLE! I HATE THEM PARLOR CARS!

HEY, JOE! COME, SEE! ROYALTY'S HOPPIN' ABOARD!



COPS AREN'T QUICK ENOUGH TO CATCH THAT OLD RASCAL. BET HE'S COMING HERE TO NEW YORK. I'D BETTER TIP OFF MY CREW!



NOT COMING UP TO THE GYM, WILSON?

NO HANDBALL TODAY, JUDGE. TOMORROW, PERHAPS!

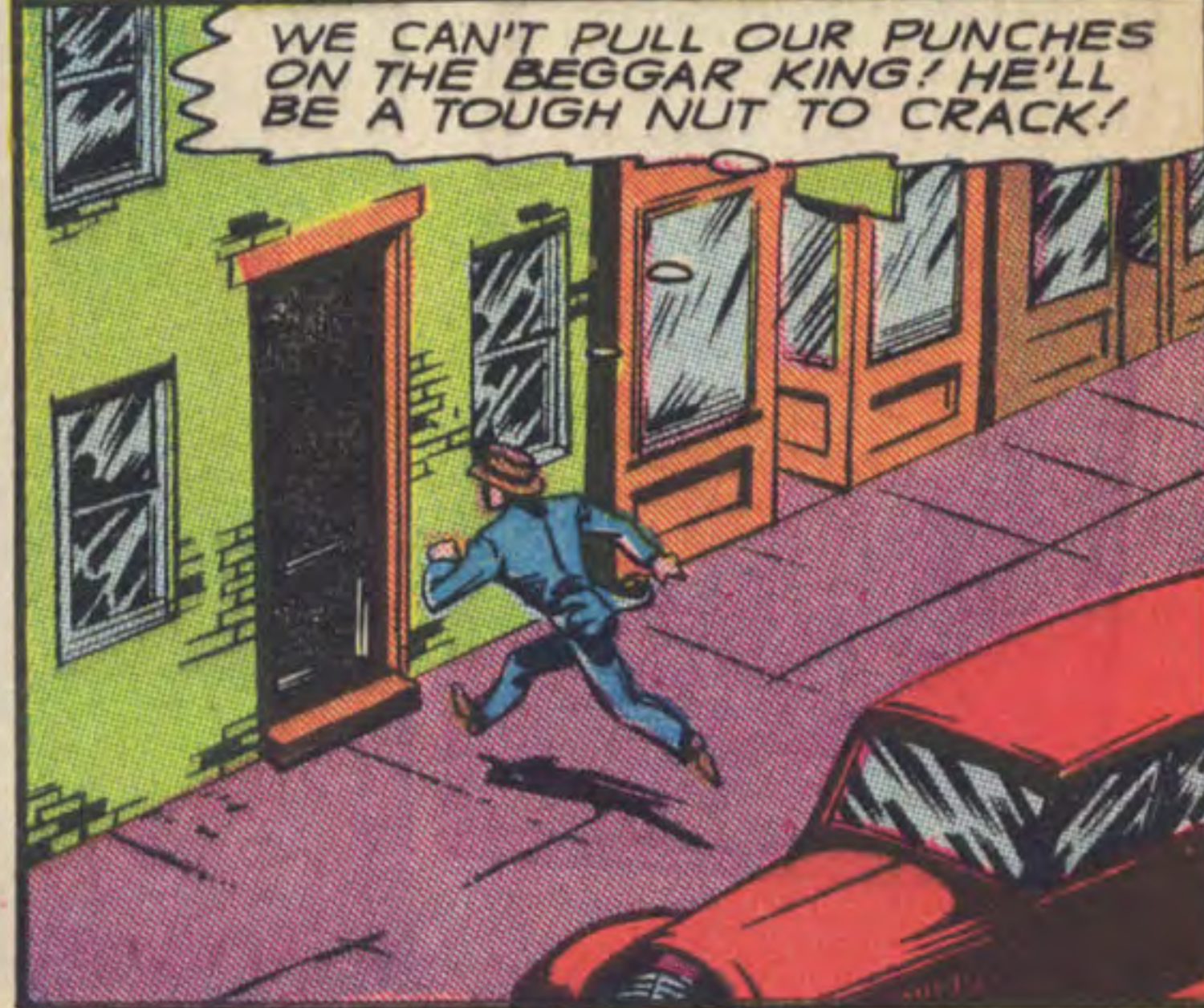


JUDGE THAYER WOULD HAVE NINE FITS IF HE DISCOVERED THAT SHORTY WILSON-- WEALTHY SPORTSMAN AND FORMER ALL-AMERICAN END IS THE BLACK DWARF!



Parking his coupe, Shorty heads for a dingy stairway that leads to the Black Dwarf's headquarters.

WE CAN'T PULL OUR PUNCHES ON THE BEGGAR KING! HE'LL BE A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK!



I EXPECT THE BOYS
BACK ANY MINUTE,
BOSS. WHAT'S
COOKIN' IN
CRIME'S
KITCHEN?

HOLDUPS, PURSE
SNATCHING AND
PICKPOCKETING
UNDER THE **EXPERT**
SUPERVISION OF THE
BEGGAR KING!



THEY'LL RUN THE
COPS RAGGED!
THINK WE CAN
BREAK UP THE
BEGGARS, ARSENIC?

I'LL GUARANTEE IT
WON'T BE A
BLOODLESS
BATTLE, BOSS!
HERE COME
THE BOYS!



ABOUT FACE,
NITRO! YOU
AND THE HUMAN
FLY ARE GOING
TO FIND ME A
BEARDED
GIANT!

YOU
KIDDIN'?
UH- THE
BEGGAR
KING
AIN'T IN
TOWN?



ON THE BALL,
NITRO! A
FAMOUS SAFE
CRACKER LIKE
YOU AIN'T
AFRAID OF A
RAGGETY
OLE BEGGAR!

I AIN'T
'FRAID OF
NOTHIN'
SMALLER
THAN A
MOOSE,
MR. FLY!
LET'S GO!



JUMP INTO YOUR
GLAD RAGS, TOOTS,
AND DRAG OLD
FIFTY- SEVENTH
STREET WITH
YOUR SEQUIN
PURSE!

I HATE
MOLL
BUZZERS.
MUST I
BRING 'IM
BACK
ALIVE?



AHA! THE SWEET SYMPHONY
OF **POLICE CAR SIRENS!**
BEGGAR KING HAS
COMPETITION-- OR
IS GIVING IT!



Meanwhile in a Bowery hash house--

GUY JUST PHONED
THAT **BLACK DWARF**
IS ON THE TOWN
TONIGHT, KING!

SNOOPIN', EH?
I'LL FIND THAT
RUNT AND BREAK
EVERY BONE IN
HIS BODY!



YOU KNOW **BLACK DWARF**? WHERE CAN I FIND HIM, PARROT?

CRIPES, KING!
DON'T ASK ME!
I KEEP MESELF
WHERE THE BLACK
DWARF **AIN'T!**



POSSIBLY I CAN
AID IN THE SEARCH,
YOUR MAJESTY!

HARRUMPH!
GET THAT GAT
OFF MY BACK,
YOU SAWED
OFF SKUNK!



IXNAY ON THE
HORSEPLAY, MY
NOBLE KNAVE, OR
I'LL POP **LEAD**
PELLETS INTO
YOUR GIZZARD!

RAT!
DON'T
TRY
THAT
AGAIN!

I'M GIVING YOU AND
YOUR BEGGAR MOB
ONE HOUR TO HOP
THE NEXT FREIGHT,
OUT OF TOWN,
OTHERWISE, YOU'LL
HAVE TO BUY 'EM
BULLETPROOF
VESTS!

YOU CAN'T PLAY BLIND
MAN'S BLUFF WHEN
YOUR SHOES SQUEAK,
CHUM! TAKE A BITE
OF **KNUCKLE PIE!**



GOTCHA-- YA SNOOPIN'
RAT! STUCK YUH NECK
OUT FOR THE
LAST TIME!

WOULDN'T
BET ON IT,
WOULD YOU?



YOU'RE HANGING AROUND
THE **WRONG JOINTS**,
KING! MY SHOULDERS
ARE **DOUBLE-JOINTED!**

HEY!
WHAT
YOU DOIN'?





YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THAT, DWARF! I'LL SLASH YOU TO RIBBONS OF RAW MEAT!

OKAY-IF YOU CAN DO IT WITHIN THE NEXT HOUR. AFTER THAT, YOU'LL LOOK LIKE HAMBURGER!



HERE YOU ARE, MY POOR MAN! BUY YOURSELF A SEVEN COURSE STEAK DINNER!

T'ANKS, MA'AM!

CRIPES! WILL YA LOOK AT DA ROCKS ON HER WRISTS! I'LL GIVE LOU THE SIGNAL!



HE'S FLAGGING A FOOTPAD UP AHEAD. WELL, BROTHER-- YOU'D BETTER WATCH OUT!



NO DICE, DRIP! LITTLE ARSENIC MAKES A SPECIALTY OF LEAD POISONING!



WHAT'S THE GAFF, GOON? YOU ONE OF THE BEGGAR KING'S BOYS? HOW DOES HE PAY OFF? GIVE-- OR I'LL TWEET-TWEET FOR A GENDARME!

HE PAYS OKAY MORE THAN A FENCE. SCRAM, SISTER. HERE COMES A NOSEY COP!



As the fateful hour rushes toward Black Dwarf's deadline for the Beggar King--

PSST, FLY! YOU SEE WHAT I SEE? REAR BOOTH?

YEAH--HIS HOBO HIGHNESS, I'LL SLIP OUT AND BUZZ THE BOSS.

ANY CALLS FOR ME, LIPPY?

YEAH. FLY PHONED FI' MINS AGO. YOU FLOAT IN REAR OF GROGAN'S HASH HOUSE ON THE BOWERY, HE SAYS.



Speeding downtown, Black Dwarf closes in on his prey—

HEY! WHAT SA DA IDEA! YOU CAN'T-A--!

SHH, LUIGI!



YOU GOT ENOUGH BLIND MEN, HUH? WHAT I HAFTA DO-- CUT OFF A LEG TO JOIN YOUR MOB?

BLOW, BUD! I'M BUSY! HEY-- YOU GOT THE RIGHT TIME?



THE TIME, SIRE? WHY, THIS IS THE HOUR FOR YOUR DDT SHOWER!

YOU! I'LL SHOWER YOU WITH PAVING BLOCKS!



NEAT PILE OF SWAG YOUR SAPPERS SNATCHED TONIGHT! RUN ABOUT FIFTY THOUSAND, WON'T IT?

SHOOT-- BUT I'M COMING AT YUH JUST THE SAME!



I WASN'T PULLING YOUR LEG, KING, WHEN I TOLD YOU TO LEAVE TOWN WITHIN AN HOUR! HEAR THOSE SIRENS?

YOU SNEAKIN' RAT! YOU BUZZED THE COPS!



Half an hour later--

SO! THIS IS WHERE YOU HANG OUT! I'VE BEEN TEARING ALL OVER TOWN TO GIVE YOU THE LOWDOWN ON KING!

WE'VE PUT HIM OFF OUR LIST, ARSENIC! HEY, LUIGI! BRING THE LADY PIE A LA MODE AND COFFEE!



THE

Gay DESPERADO

Hunted by the law for the crimes of another, Jim Collins became a fugitive, hidden behind the identity of **The Gay Desperado**. And in a desperate attempt to tear the blindfold from the eyes of justice, **The Gay Desperado** found a two-gun ghost, who killed for **HAUNTED LAND!**



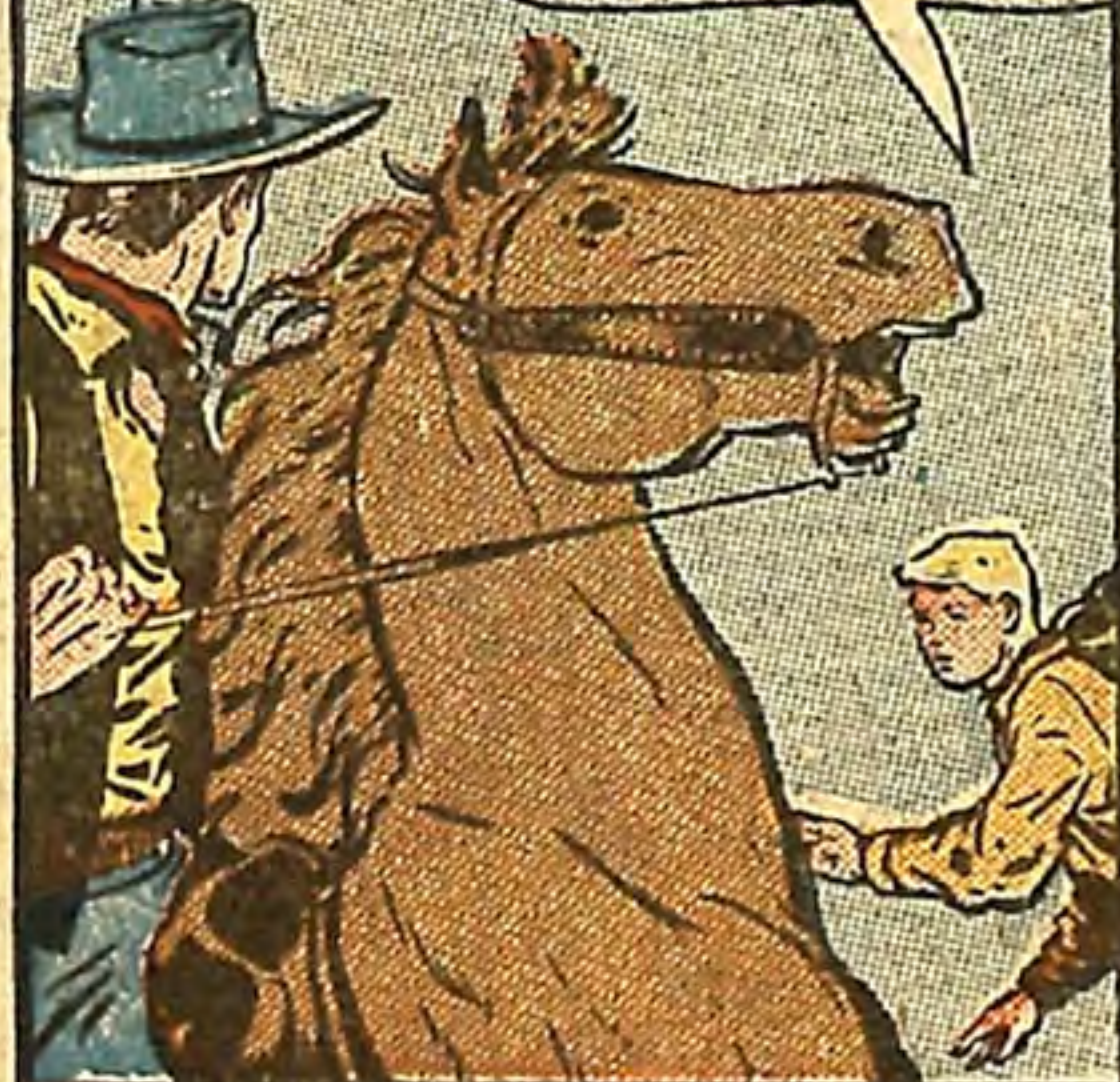
PATSY!
WAKE
UP!

HOW?
WHAT'S
COOKIN',
JIM?



THAT'S
WHAT WE
AIM TO
FIND OUT,
KID!

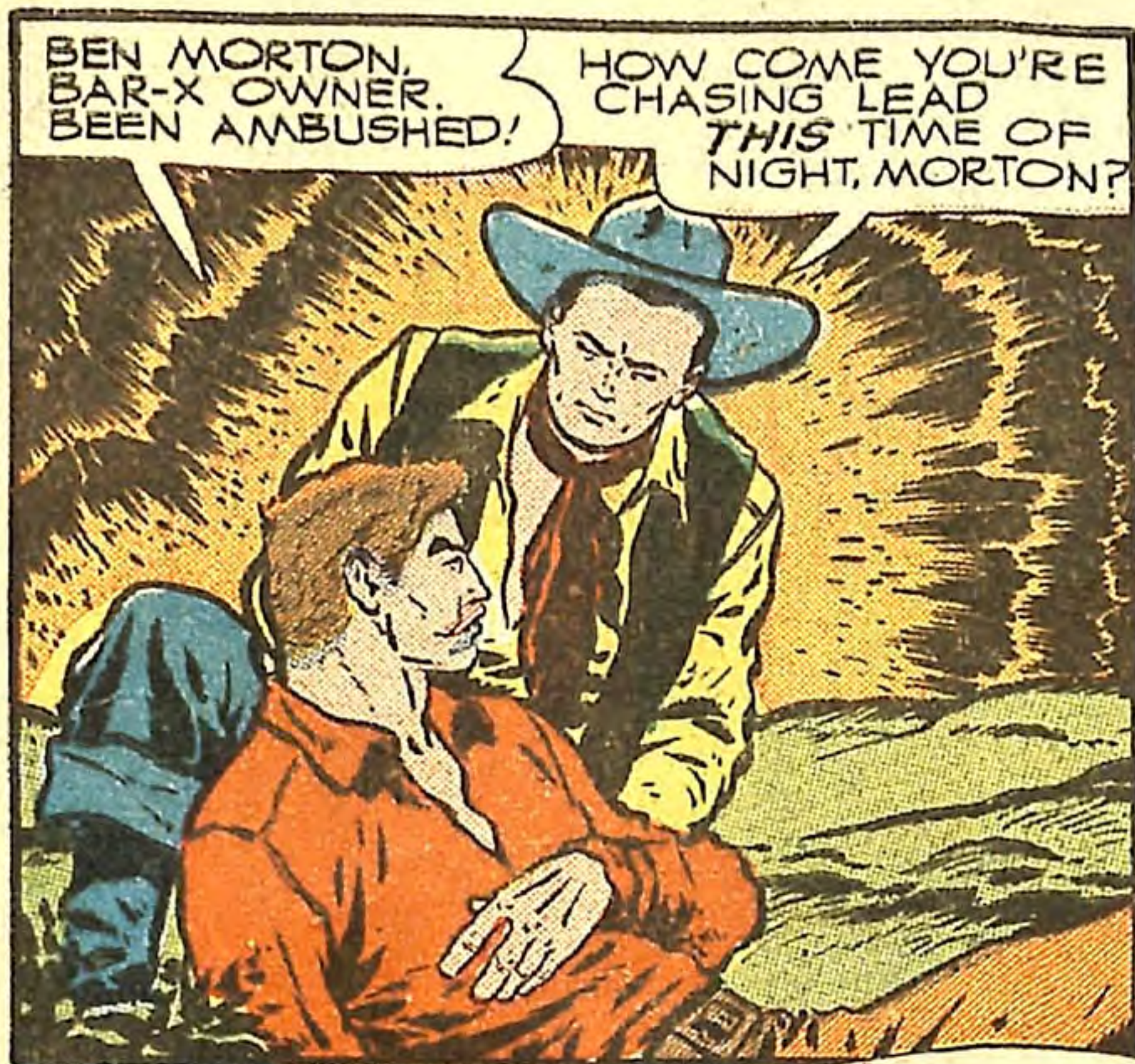
MAYBE THE
LAW'S AFTER
YOU AGAIN,
JIM! YOU
OR YOUR
OTHER SELF,
**THE GAY
DESPERADO!**



HELP!

A WOUNDED
MAN ON
THE GROUND,
PATSY!



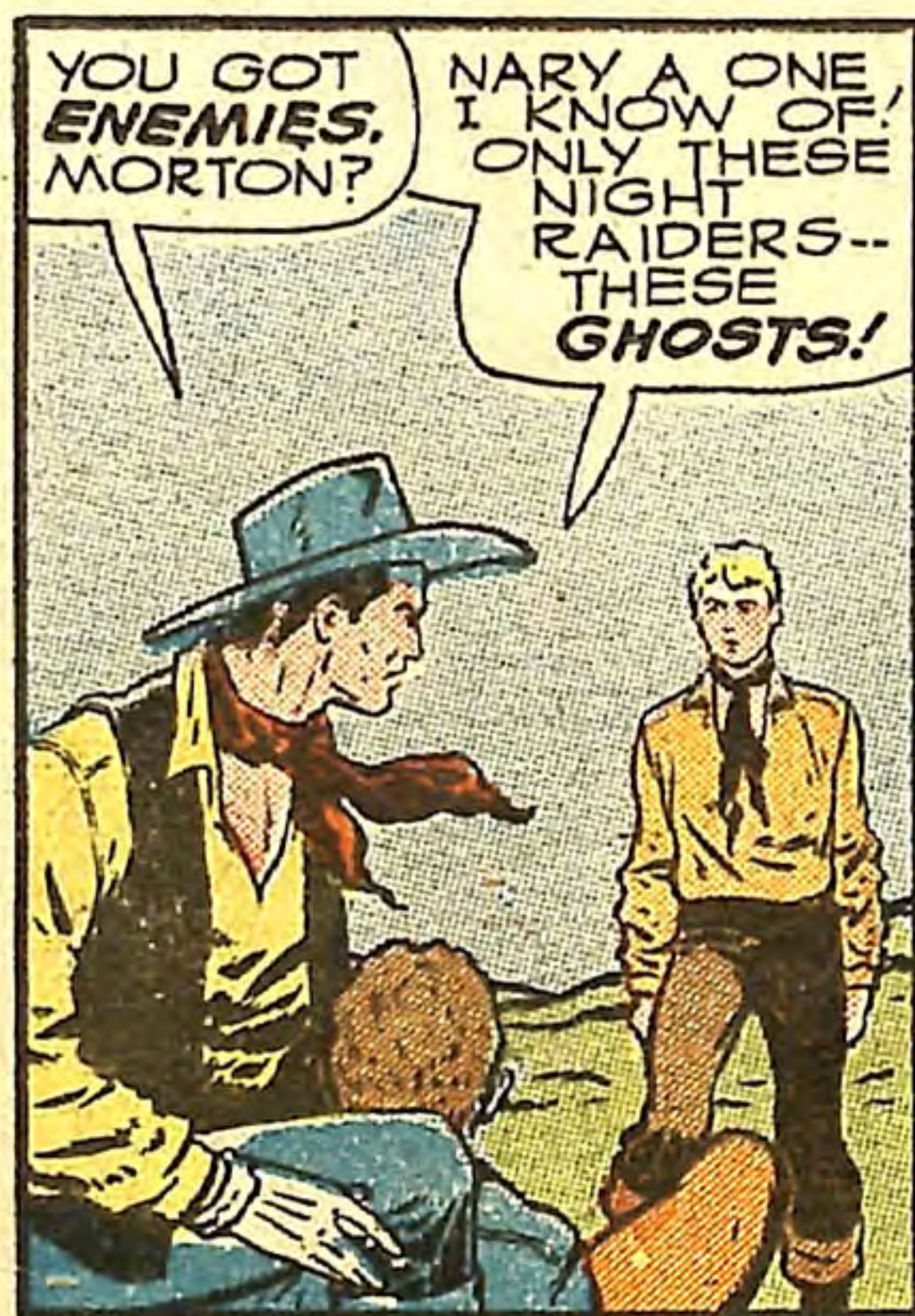


BEN MORTON, BAR-X OWNER, BEEN AMBUSHED!

HOW COME YOU'RE CHASING LEAD **THIS** TIME OF NIGHT, MORTON?



GHOST RIDERS HAUNT MY LAND! TONIGHT I ALMOST GOT 'EM-- RUSTLIN' MY CATTLE, BUT THE COYOTES FED ME BULLETS OUT OF **THAT THAR BRUSH!**



YOU GOT **ENEMIES**, MORTON?

NARY A ONE, I KNOW OF! ONLY THESE NIGHT RAIDERS-- THESE **GHOSTS!**



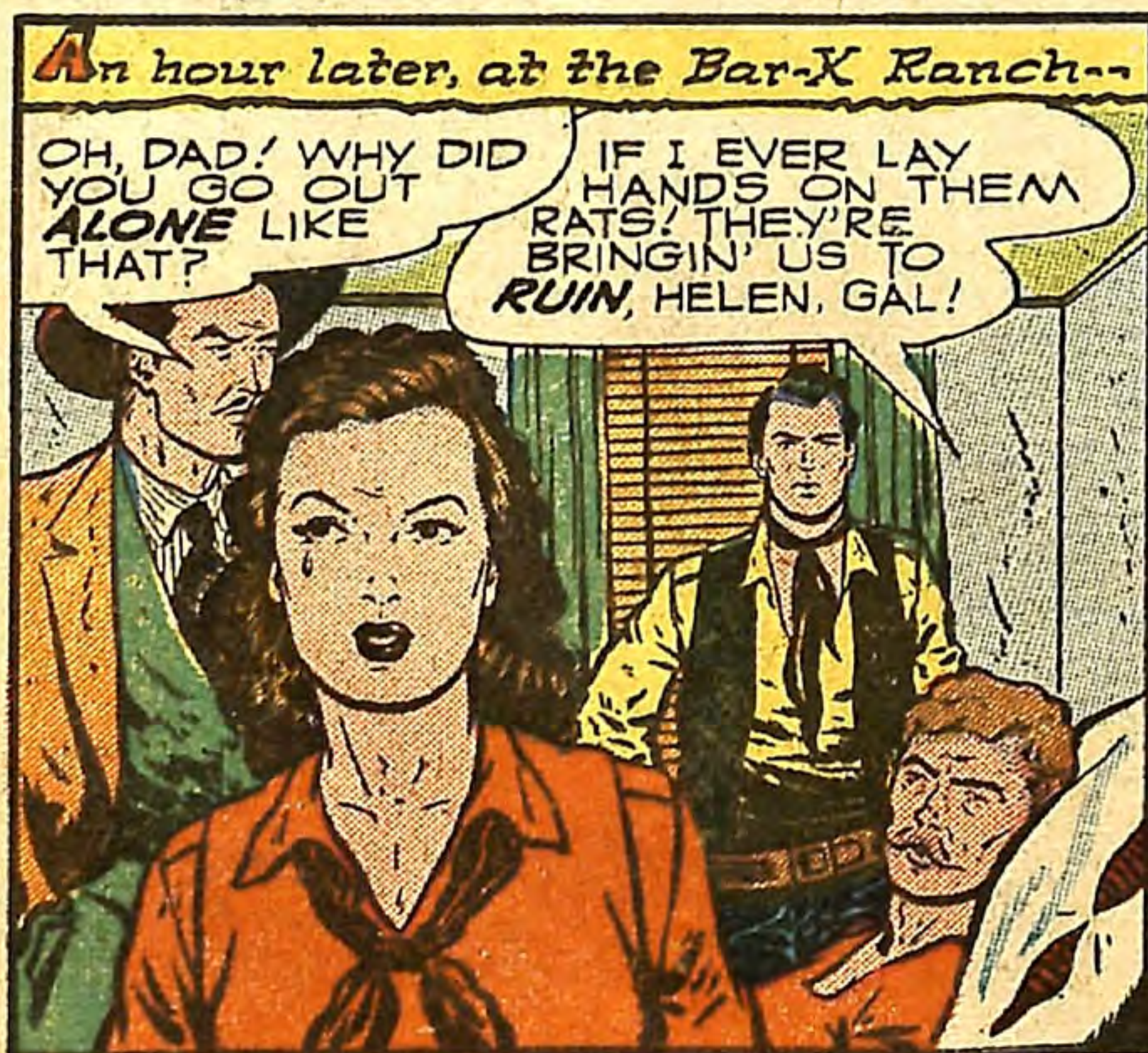
HELP MORTON UP, PATSY. WHILE I LOOK AROUND!

OKAY! COME ON, MR. MORTON, EASY NOW!



At the rustlers' abandoned campfire--

HUH! AN ACE OF SPADES FROM A **MARKED DECK!** RECKON I'D LIKE TO MEET THE **OWNER** OF THIS!



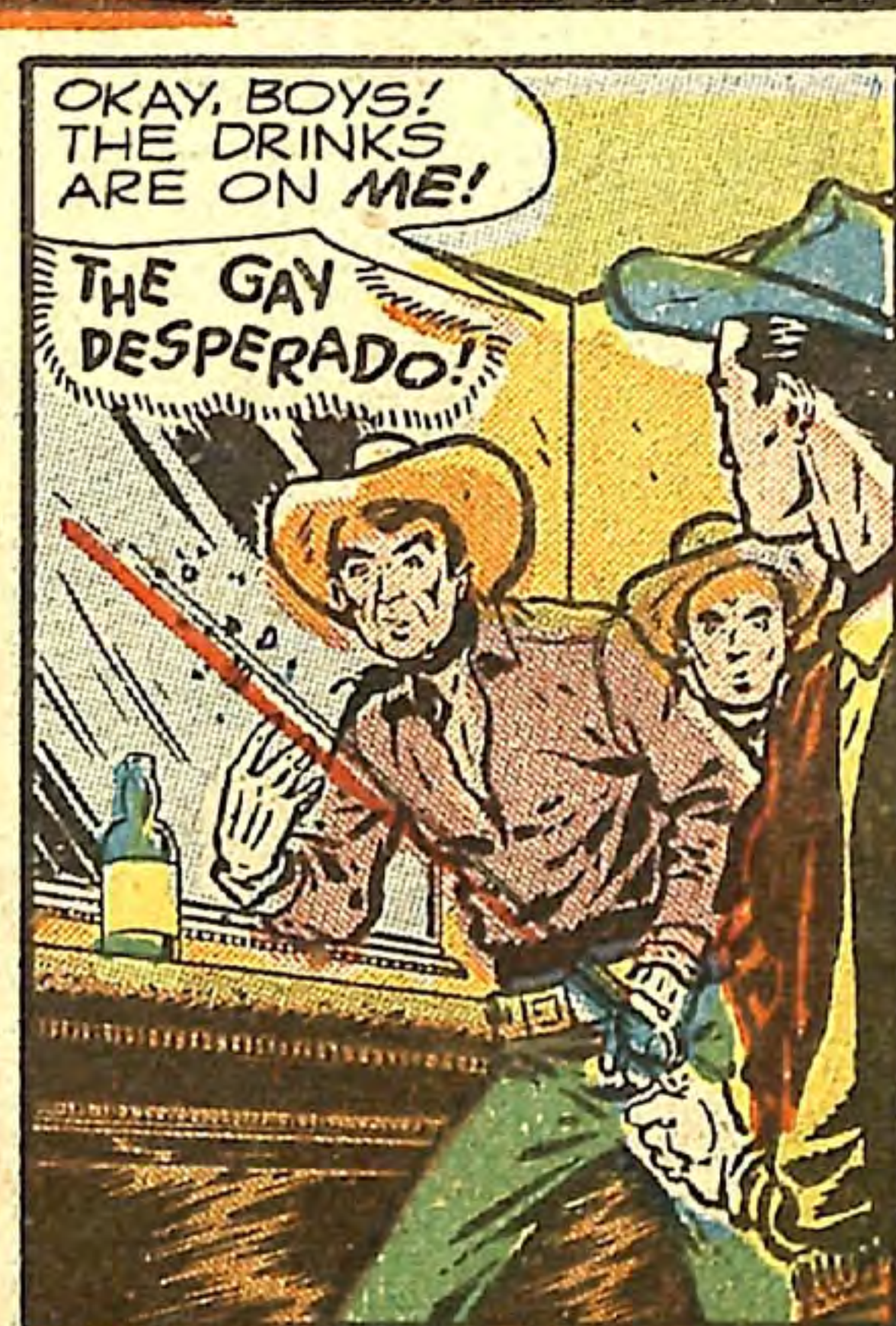
OH, DAD! WHY DID YOU GO OUT **ALONE** LIKE THAT?

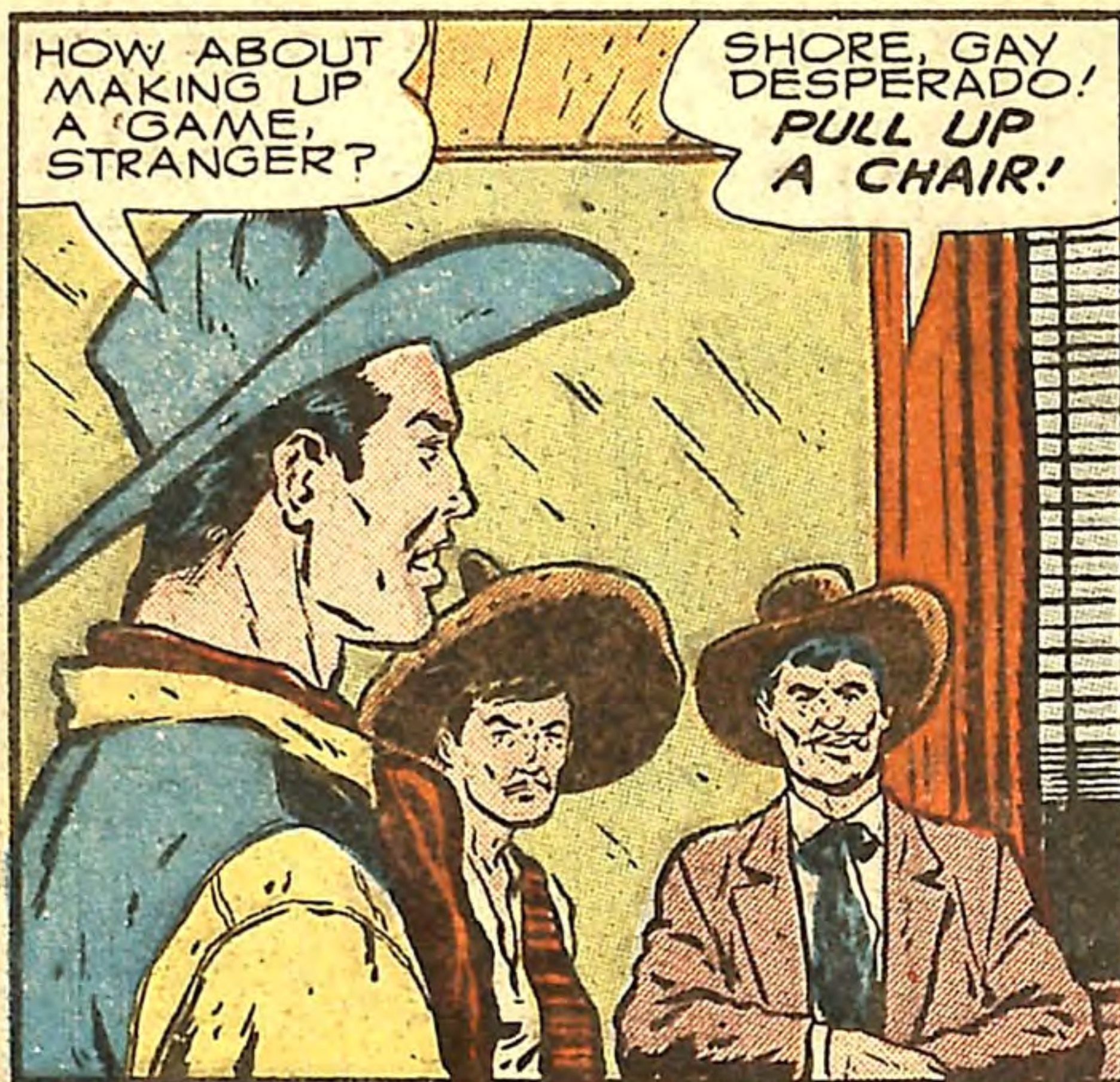
IF I EVER LAY HANDS ON THEM RATS! THEY'RE BRINGIN' US TO **RUIN**, HELEN, GAL!



DON'T RISK YOUR LIFE, BEN! YOU KNOW I'LL ALWAYS LOAN YOU WHATEVER YOU NEED!

IT'S GOOD OF YUH, MIKE STILES, BUT THAT AIN'T BEN MORTON'S WAY!





HOW ABOUT MAKING UP A 'GAME, STRANGER?

SHORE, GAY DESPERADO! **PULL UP A CHAIR!**



RECKON THAT ACE MIGHT FILL OUT YOUR DECK, TOO, STRANGER! MAYBE YOU COULD GUESS WHERE IT CAME FROM!

TALK FAST, GAY DESPERADO! **WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?**



RIGHT NOW, THE LAW WANTS **ME** FER SHOOTING BEN MORTON, BUT THE WAY THAT ACE MATCHES YOUR DECK, MAYBE WE COULD MAKE A DEAL!

WHAT'S YORE PROPOSITION?



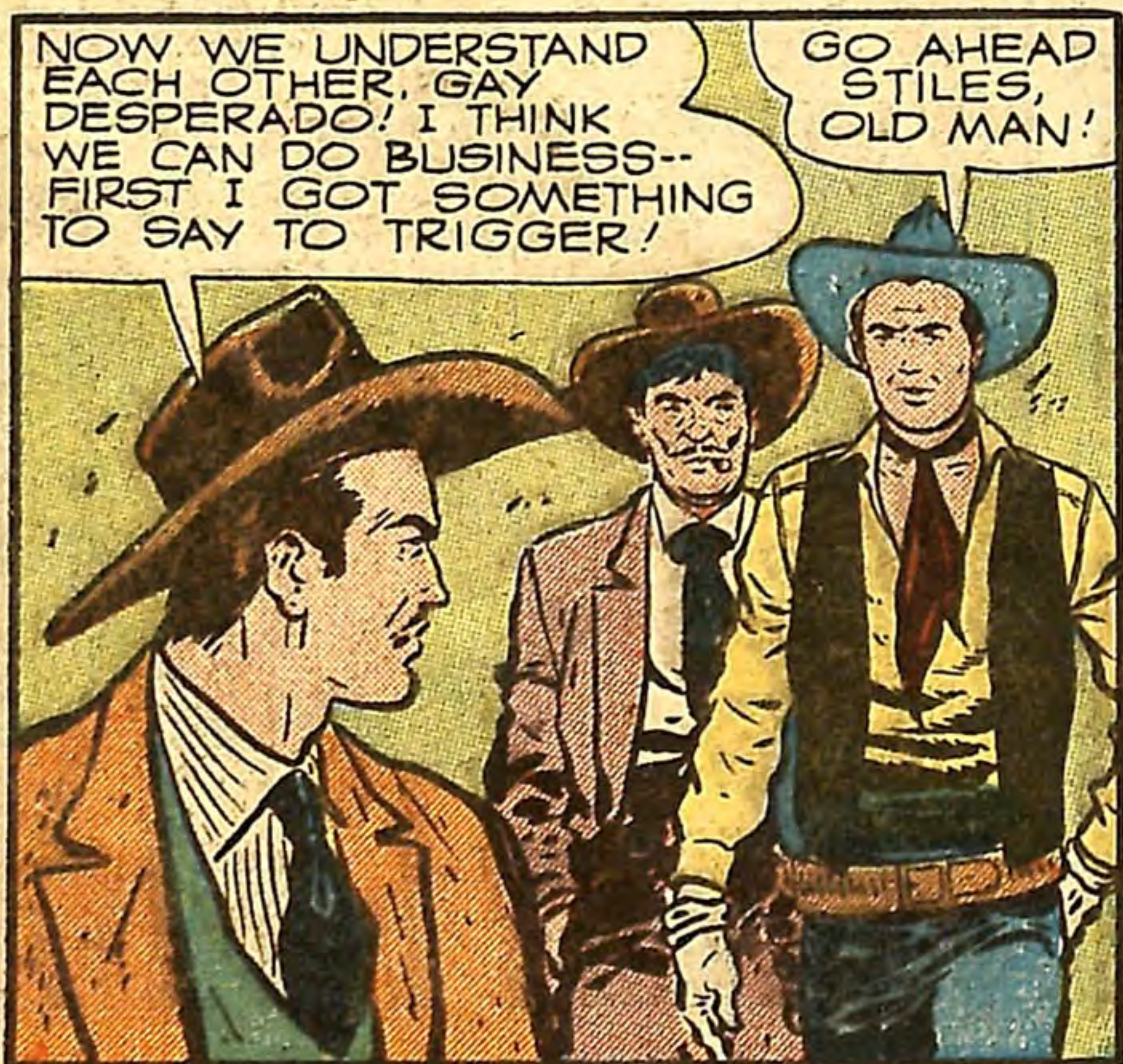
I WANT TO JOIN YOUR MOB, STRANGER. SORT OF GIVE MY SERVICES WHILE YOU HIDE ME OUT!

FAIR ENOUGH, GAY DESPERADO IF THE BOSS HAS NO OBJECTIONS, WE'LL SEE HIM TOMORROW!



MIKE, GAY DESPERADO WANTS TUH JOIN UP-- SORT OF **HIDE OUT** IN OUR MOB!

SO **YOU'RE** THE BOSS, EH, STILES?



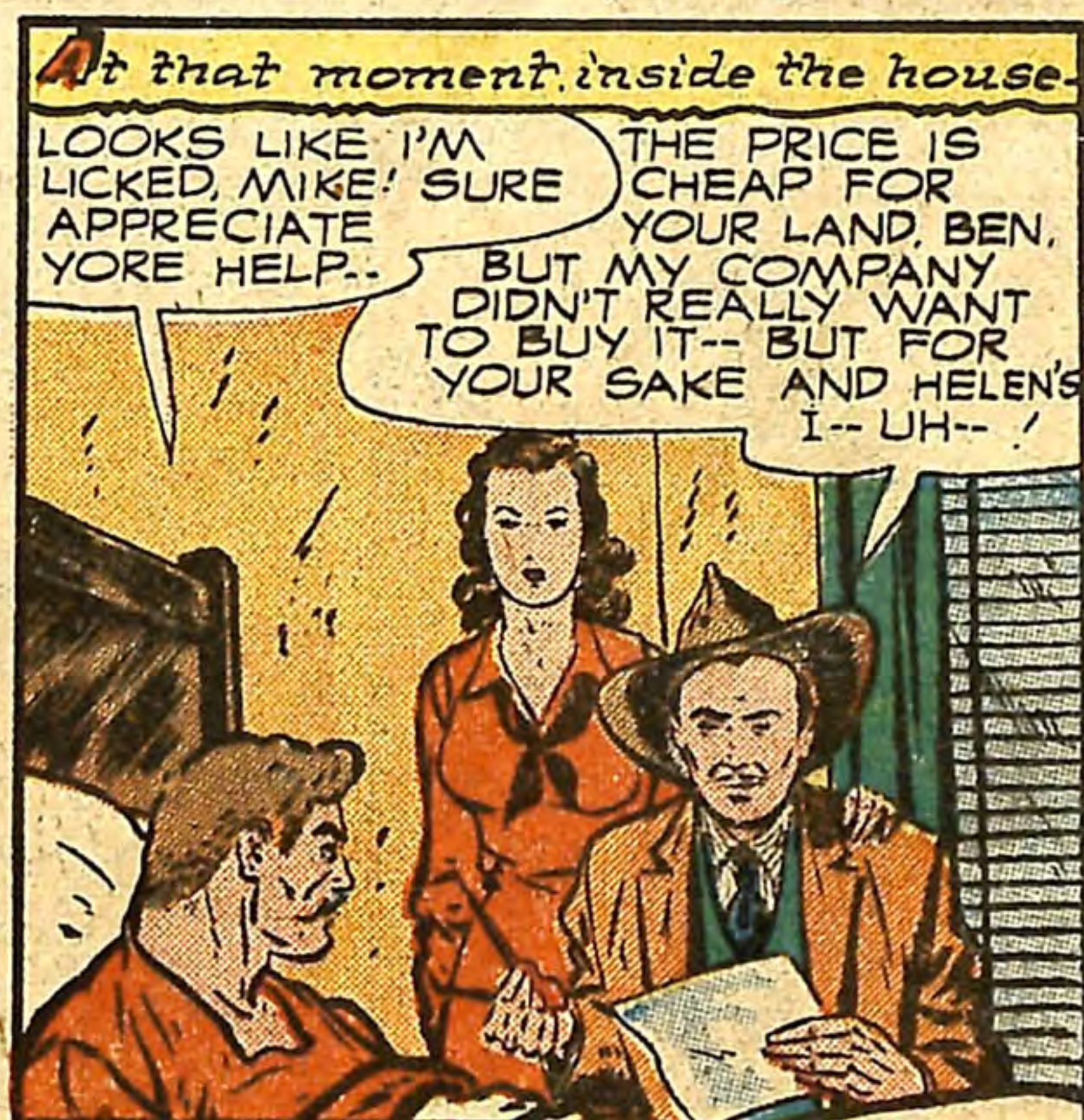
NOW WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER. GAY DESPERADO! I THINK WE CAN DO BUSINESS-- FIRST I GOT SOMETHING TO SAY TO TRIGGER!

GO AHEAD STILES, OLD MAN!



GAY DESPERADO IS **PERFECT** FOR **FRAMING** FOR THE MORTON SHOOTING! **NOW, LISTEN, CLOSELY!**

OKAY, MIKE! WHAT'S THE LOWDOWN?





DON'T SIGN THAT PAPER MORTON, BEFORE YOU READ THE LETTER I GOT HERE!

YOU!
I THOUGHT THE POSSE--!



WHY, YUH RAT, MIKE! THIS HERE PRICE IS FIVE TIMES WHAT YUH OFFERED ME! AND I NEVER GIVE YUH NO OPTION--

THERE MUST BE A MISTAKE!



AND THIS IS IT, FOLKS. NOT TAKING MY GUN! GET 'EM UP!

AND TO THINK I WAS GOING TO MARRY MIKE STILES!



YOUR MISTAKE IN NOT KNOWING THE HAND IS QUICKER THAN THE EYE!

OW-W-W!
I'LL KILL YOU, GAY DESPERADO!



YOU'D BETTER BRING YOUR GANG ALONG!

WOW! LOOK! GAY DESPERADO!



GUESS WE GOT YUH THIS TIME GAY DESPERADO!

NO, SHERIFF! READ THIS LETTER!



WELL, I'M DURNED! IT WAS MIKE STILES WHAT WAS IN YORE WHISKERS, BEN! UH, HEY WE LET THE GAY DESPERADO GET AWAY! WE WANT HIM, ANYHOW!

RECKON HE'S TOO SMART, SHERIFF!

WELL!



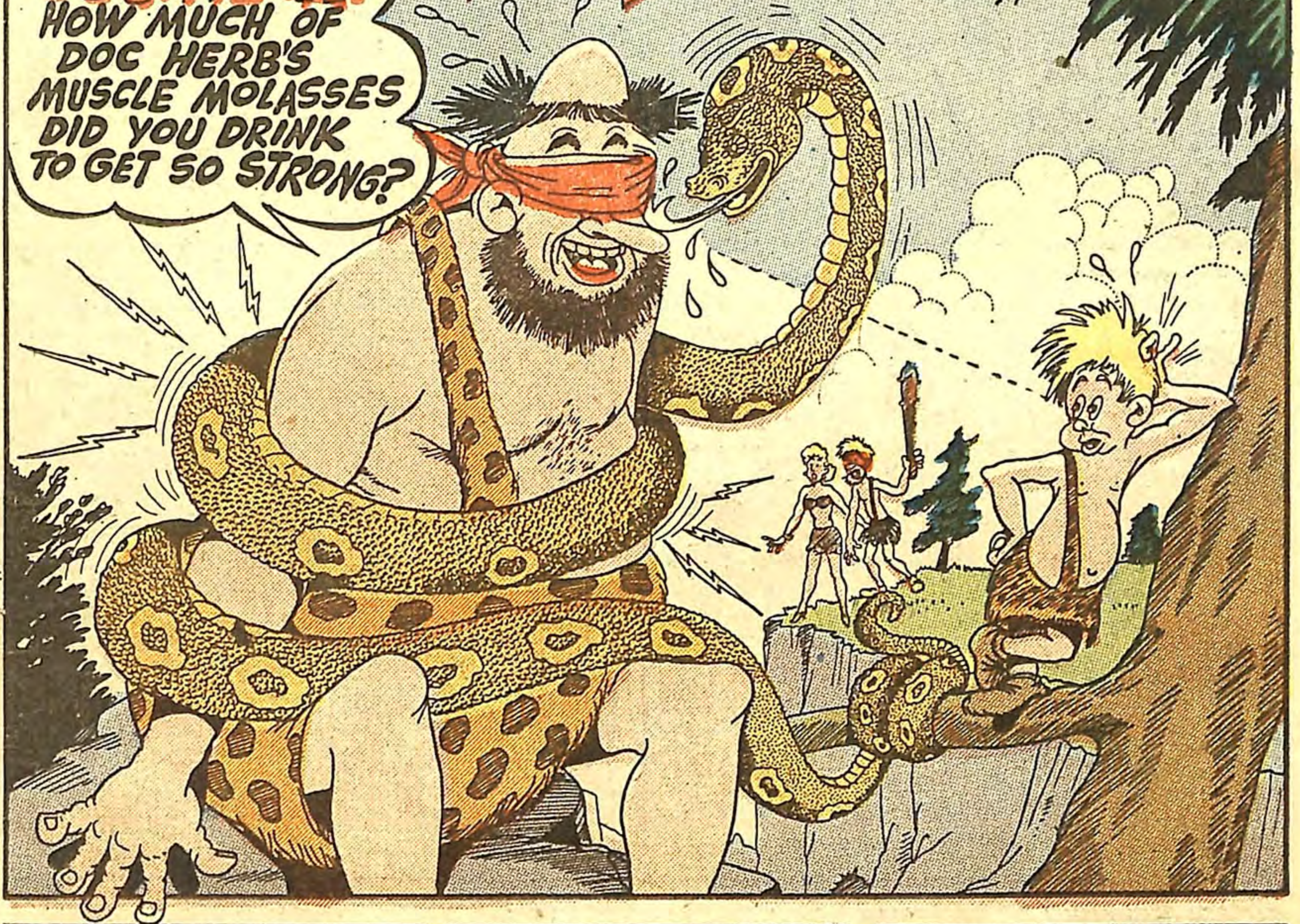
THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL, JIM!

YEAH, BUT WE SETTLED STILES, PATSY! GOSH, WONDER IF WE'LL EVER BE CLEAR O' THE LAW!

PREHISTORIC

PETE

OUCH, EVA!
HOW MUCH OF
DOC HERB'S
MUSCLE MOLASSES
DID YOU DRINK
TO GET SO STRONG?

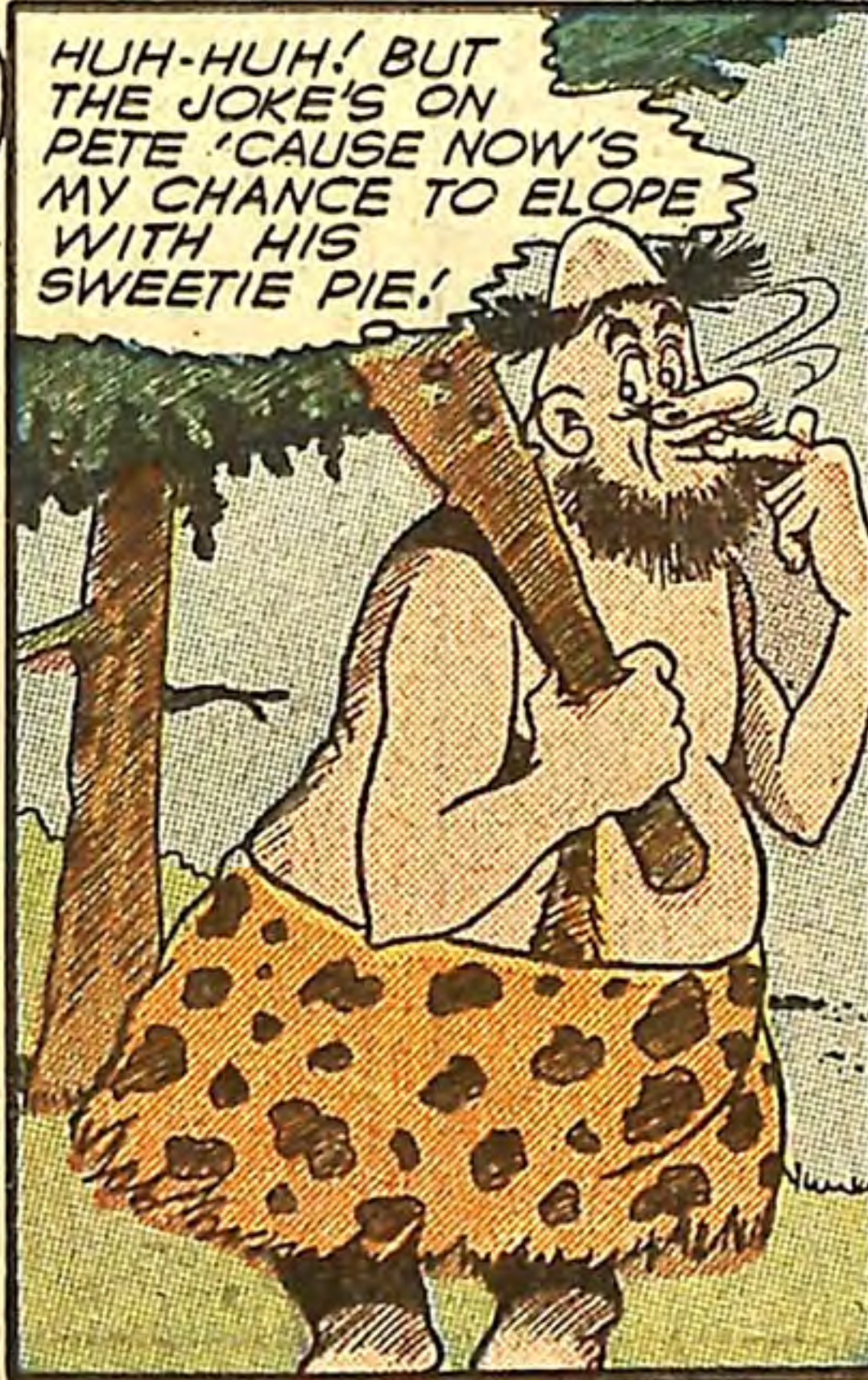


WHATCHA GOT
BESIDES BATS
IN THE BELFRY,
PETE? YUH
LOOK LIKE
THE **LAST
ROSE OF
SUMMER!**

**G'WAY--
BROOMJAW!**
I'VE PAINS
ENOUGH
WITHOUT
GETTIN' ONE
IN THE NECK
FROM YOU!



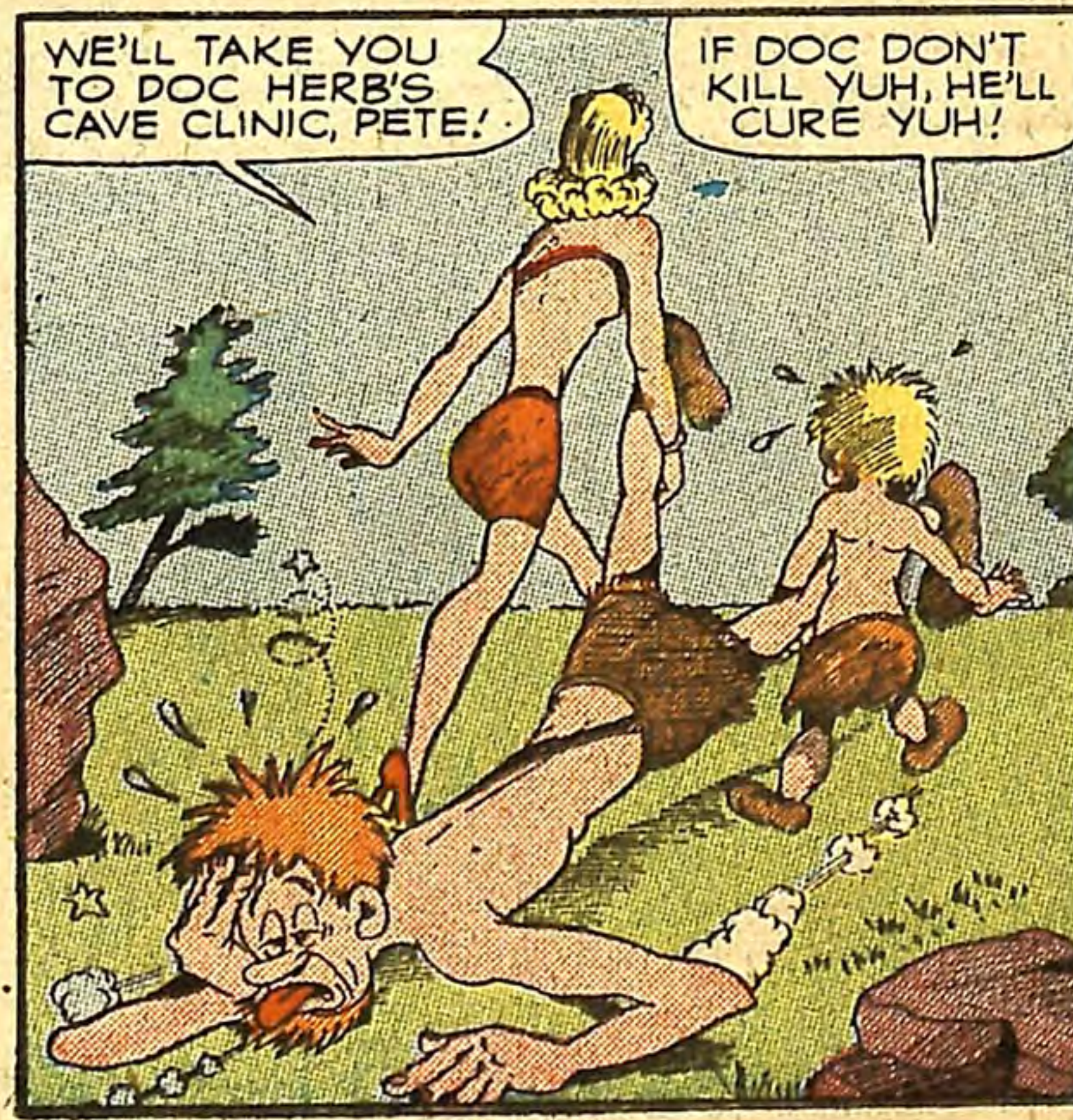
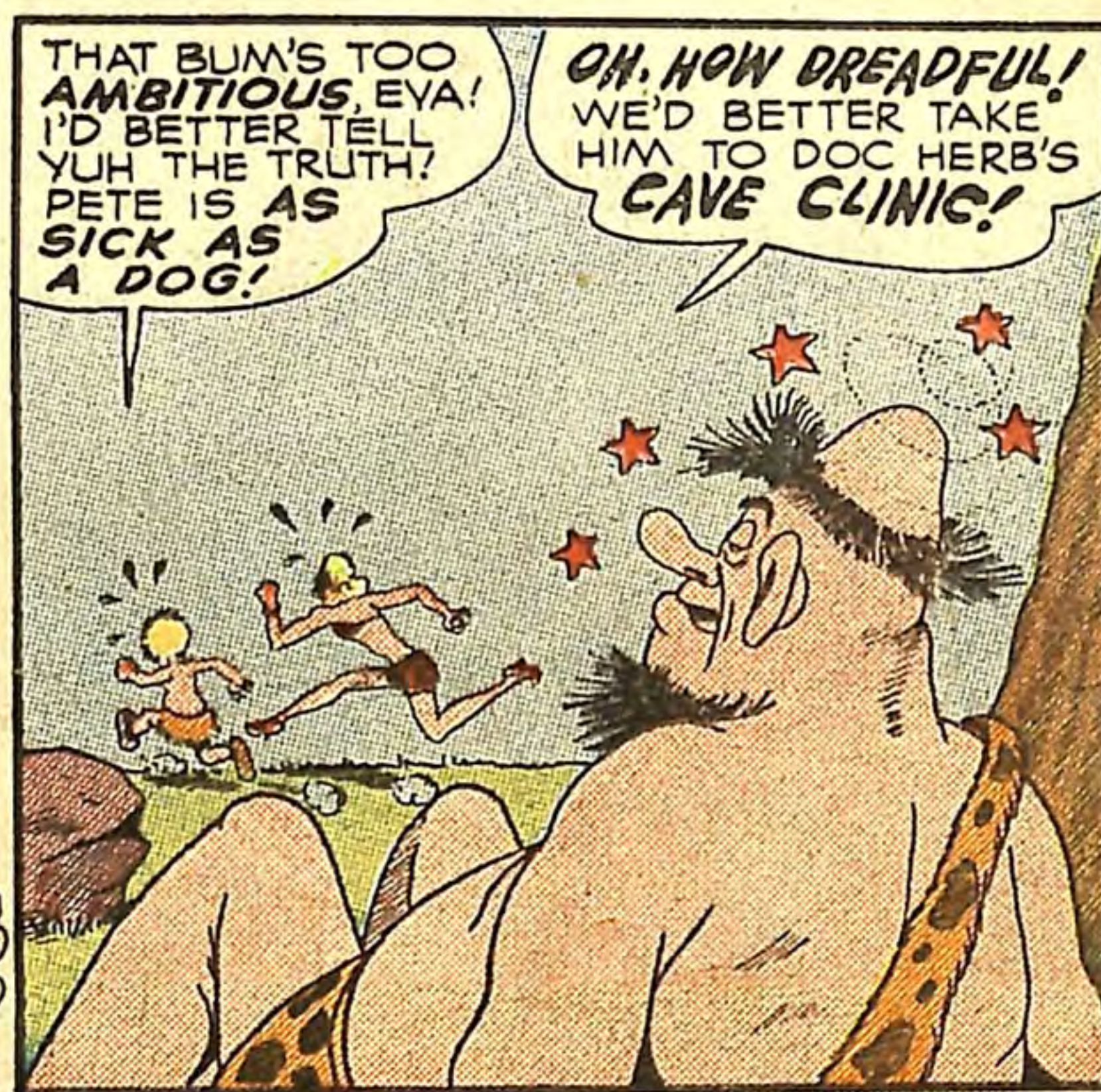
HUH-HUH! BUT
THE JOKE'S ON
PETE 'CAUSE NOW'S
MY CHANCE TO ELOPE
WITH HIS
SWEETIE PIE!

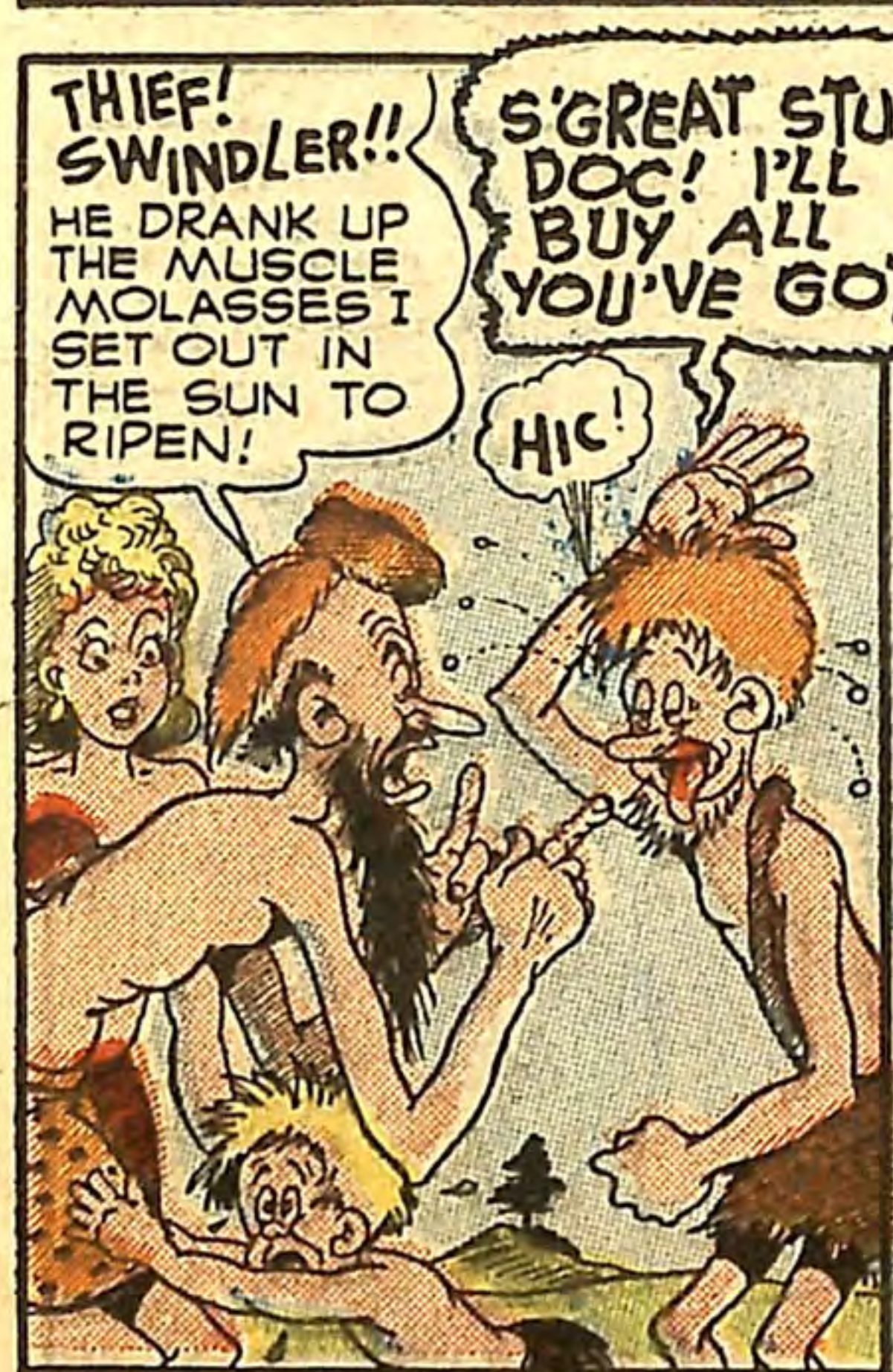
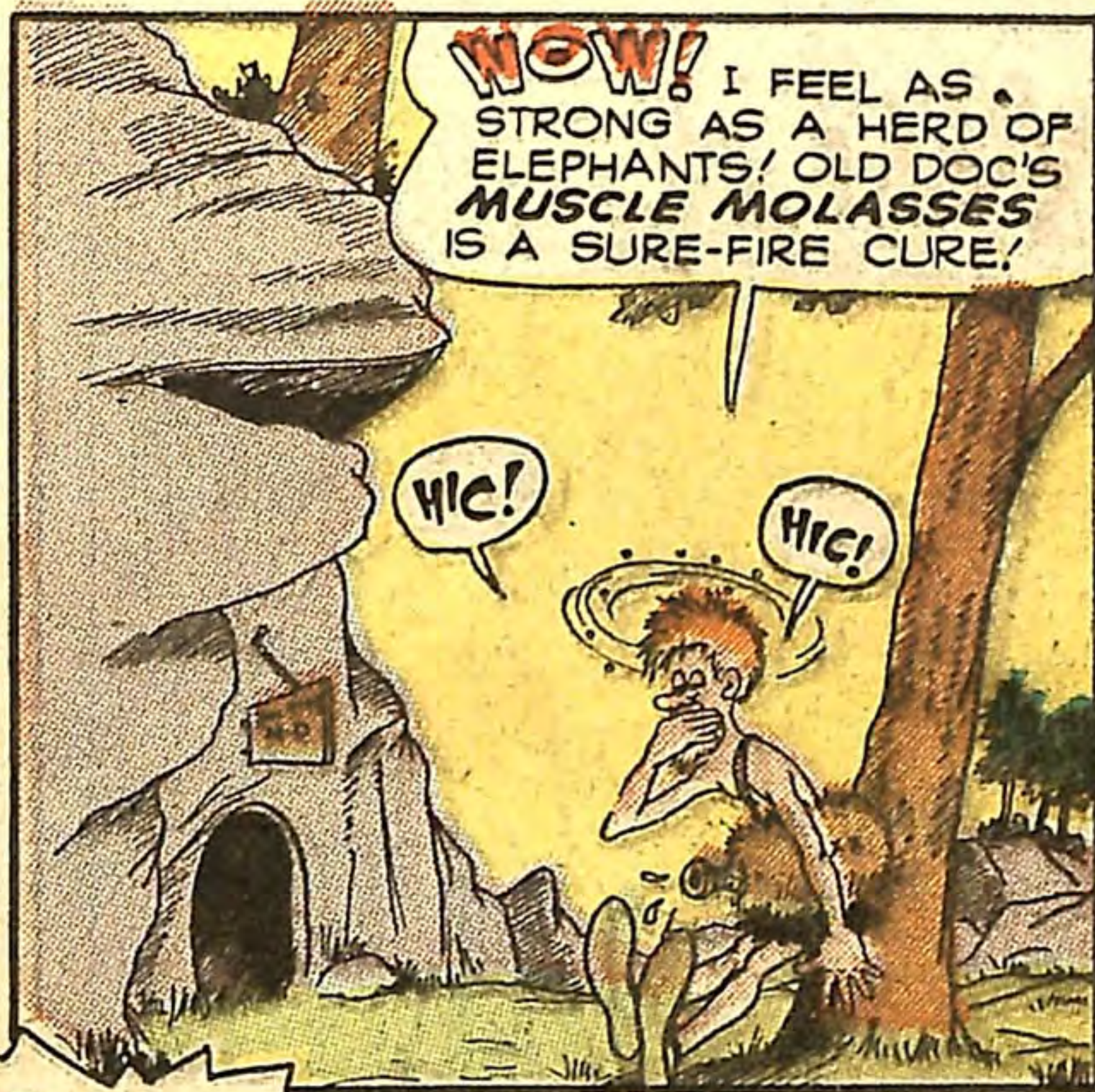
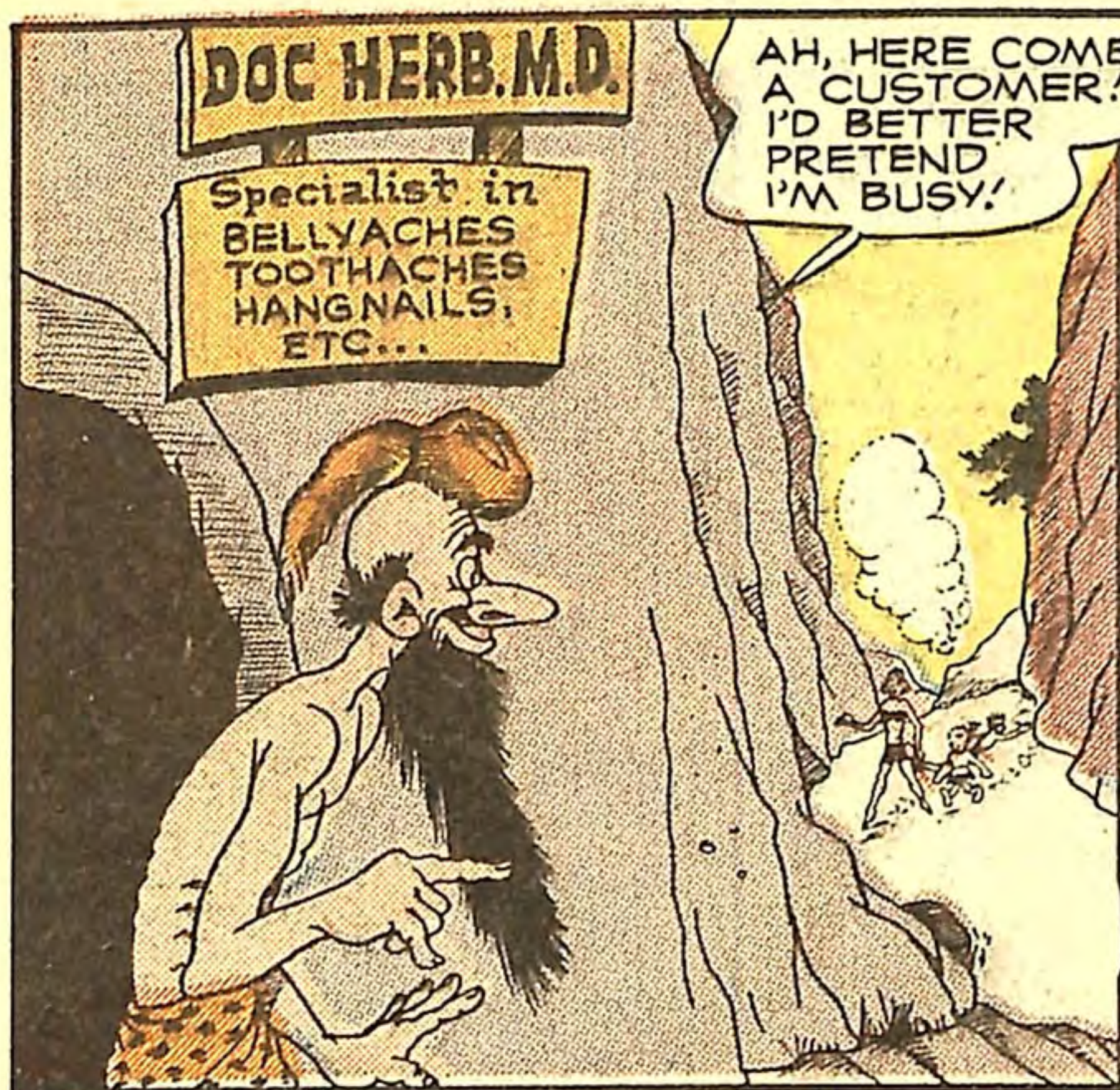


HOWDY--
PEBBLE M'LAD.
IS YOUR
CHARMING
SISTER
AT HOME?

**SCRAM,
BROOMY--
BEFORE I
BUST YUH
ONE!**









YOU FAKER! YOU WEREN'T SICK AT ALL-- BUT YOU WILL BE WHEN I'M FINISHED WITH YOU!

GLUB! GLUB!



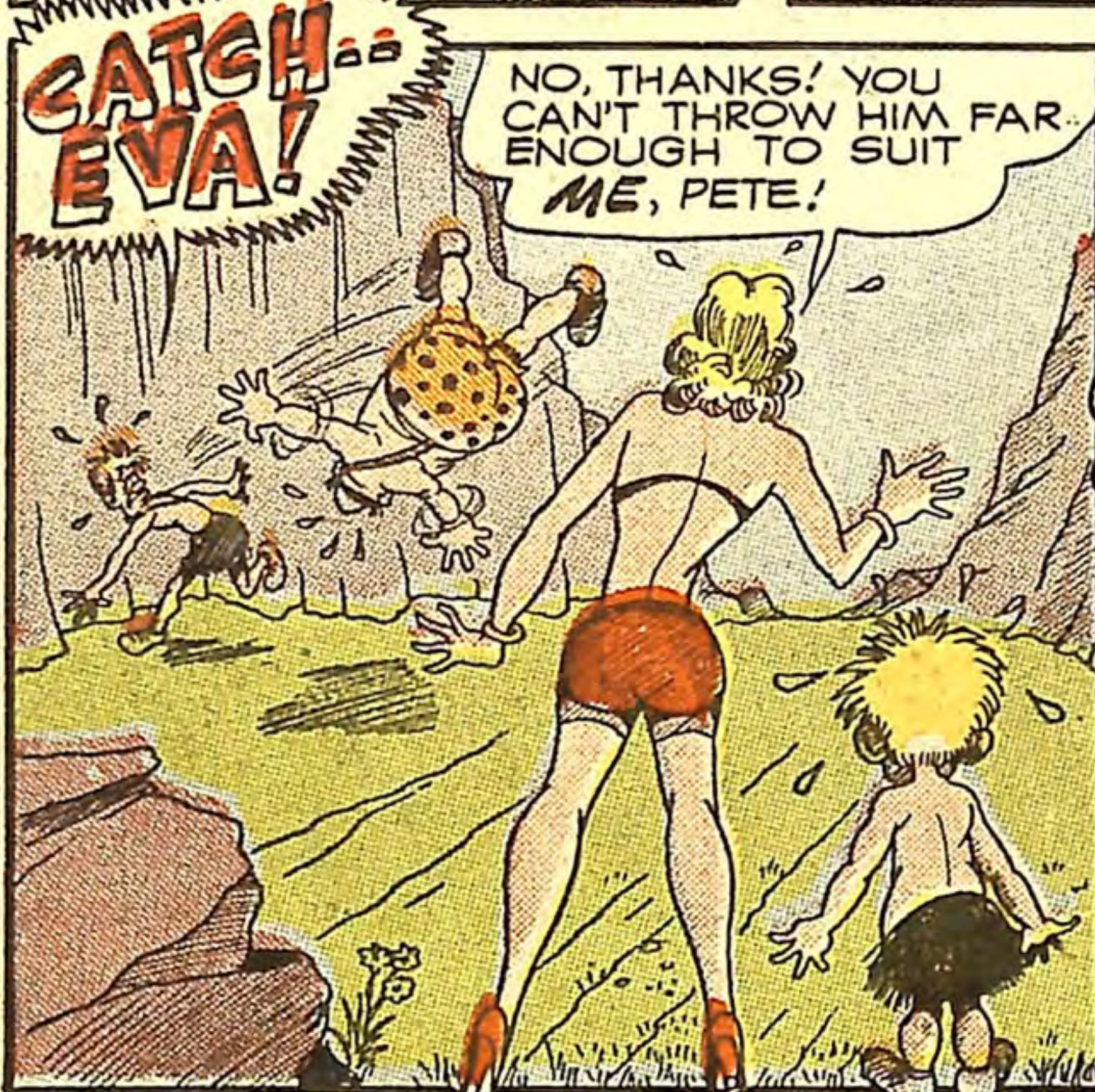
HOWDY BROOMJAW! WHAT YOU RUNNING FROM?

OH, PETE! LOOK OUT!



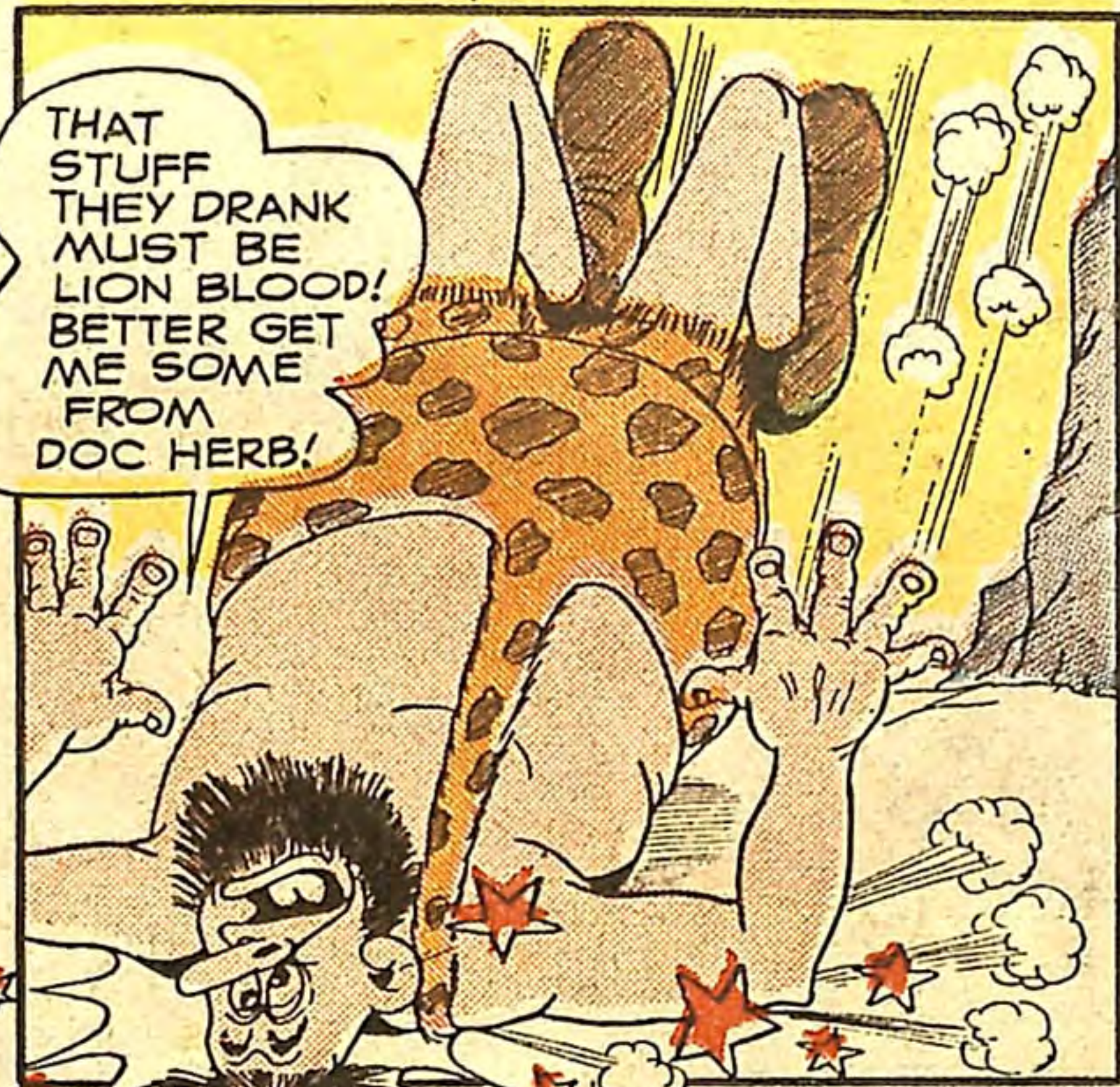
LET GO OF MY FEET, YOU NUMBSKULL, OR I'LL BRAIN YUH!

WHAT D'YOU KNOW ABOUT BRAINS, BROOMJAW?



CATCH EVA!

NO, THANKS! YOU CAN'T THROW HIM FAR ENOUGH TO SUIT ME, PETE!

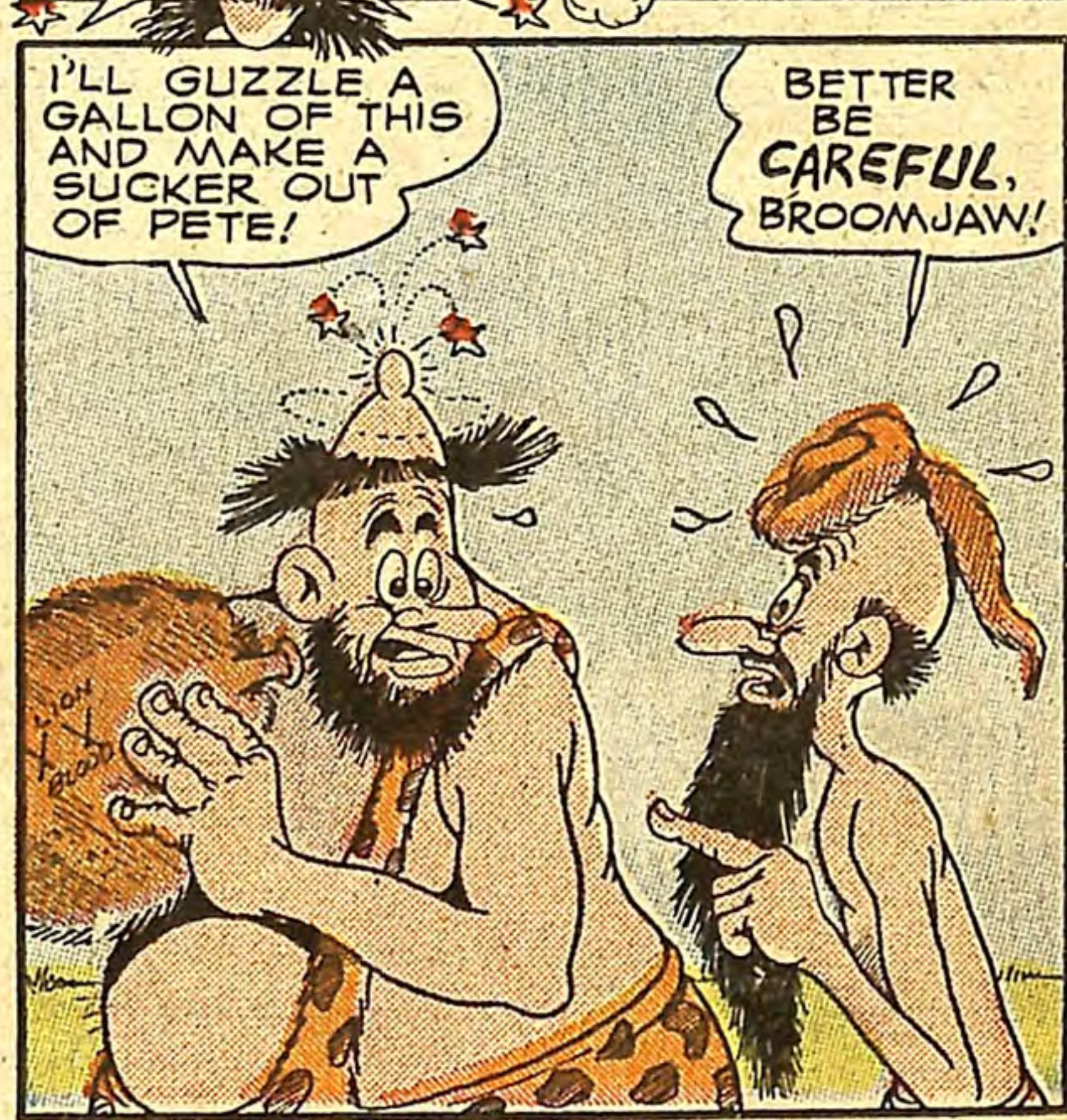


THAT STUFF THEY DRANK MUST BE LION BLOOD! BETTER GET ME SOME FROM DOC HERB!



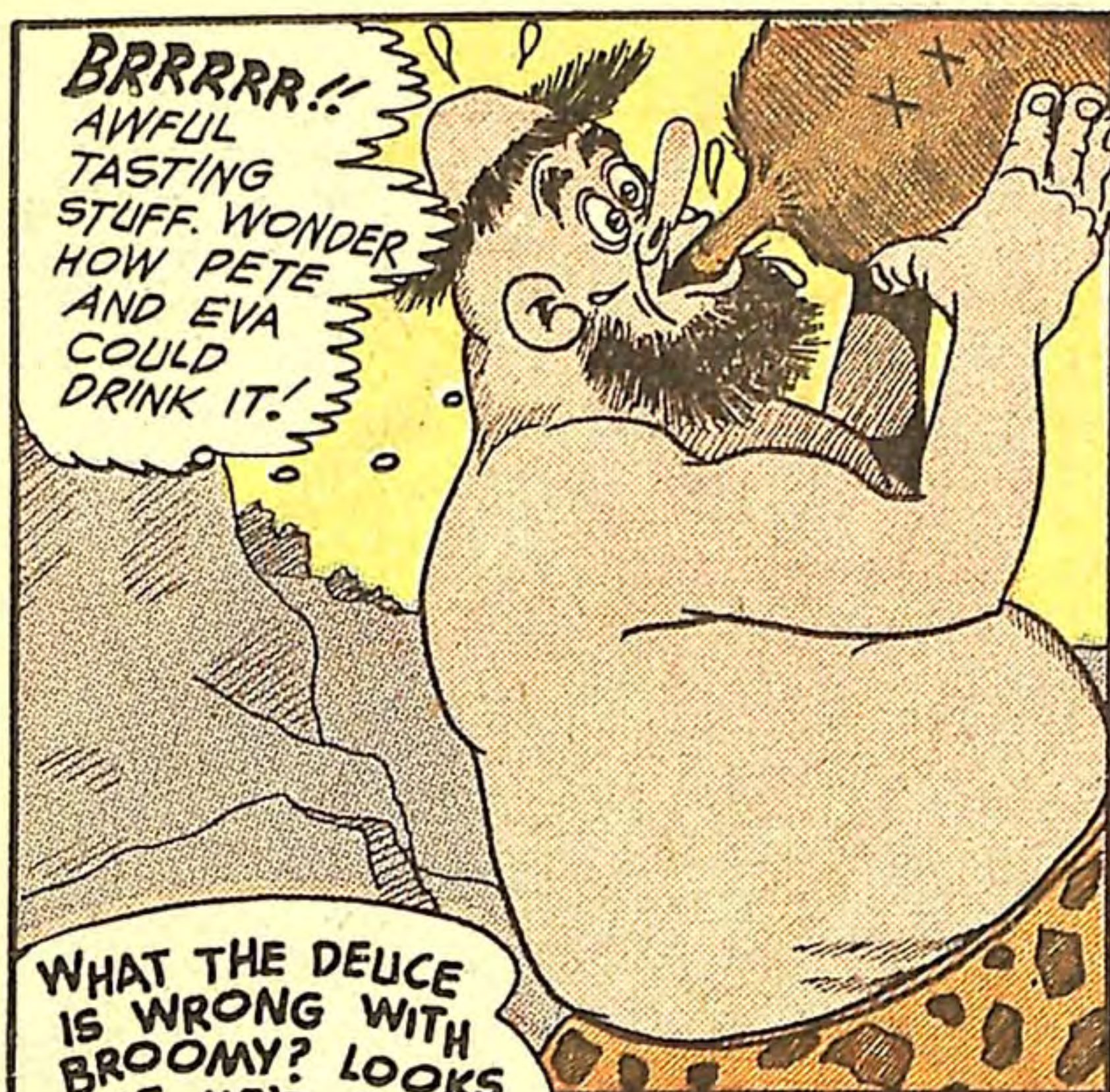
HEY, DOC! SELL ME A GALLON OF LION BLOOD, WILL YUH?

YOU SURE THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, BROOMJAW?



I'LL GUZZLE A GALLON OF THIS AND MAKE A SUCKER OUT OF PETE!

BETTER BE CAREFUL, BROOMJAW!



WHAT THE DEUCE IS WRONG WITH BROOMY? LOOKS LIKE HE'D SEEN A GHOST!

A BIG LION IS CHASING HIM!



WHERE THE FIRE, BROOMJAW?

YOU-- YOU KILLED HIM WITH ONE BLOW! DOC MUST'VE GOT HIS MEDICINE MIXED WRONG! THAT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN LION BLOOD HE SOLD ME!

SO THAT'S WHAT DOC GAVE YOU! WELL, YOU ASKED FOR IT!



STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC. REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933 OF RED SEAL Comics, published quarterly at St. Louis, Missouri, for June 1, 1946.

State of New York, County of New York, ss. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Harry A. Chesler, who, having been duly sworn, according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of Harry "A" Chesler, Jr. Publications, Inc., and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc. of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse side of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, Harry A. Chesler, Jr., 50 Main Street, Succasunna, N. J.; Editor, Will Harr, 163 West 23rd Street, N. Y. C.; Business Manager, Harry A. Chesler, 163 West 23rd Street, N. Y. C.

2. That the owners are: Harry "A" Chesler, Jr. Publications, Inc., 50 Main Street, Succasunna, N. J.; Harry "A" Chesler, Jr., Succasunna, N. J.; Betty Chesler, Succasunna, N. J.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stocks and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stocks, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th day of May, 1946

(Signed) HARRY A. CHESLER,

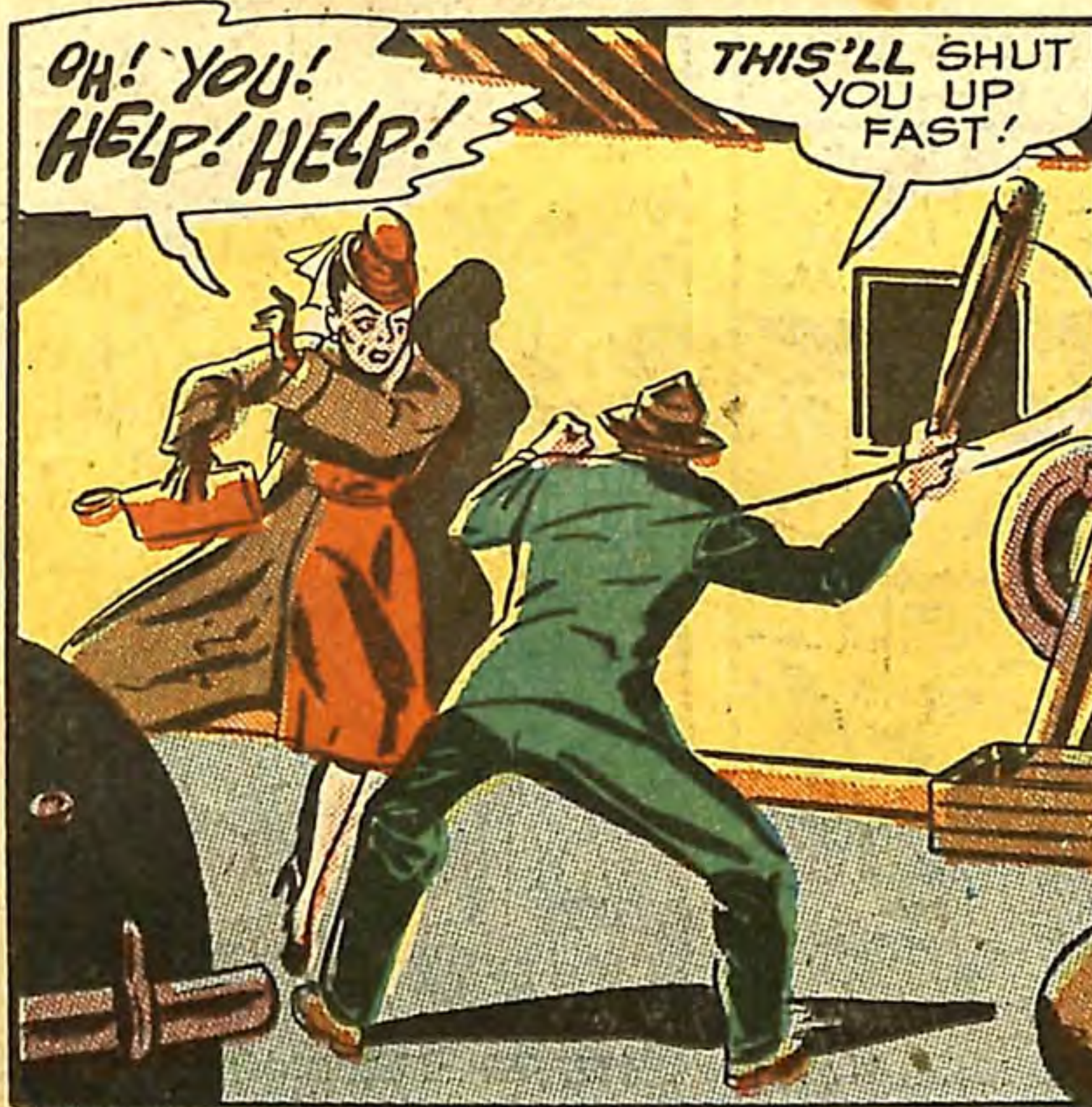
Business Manager

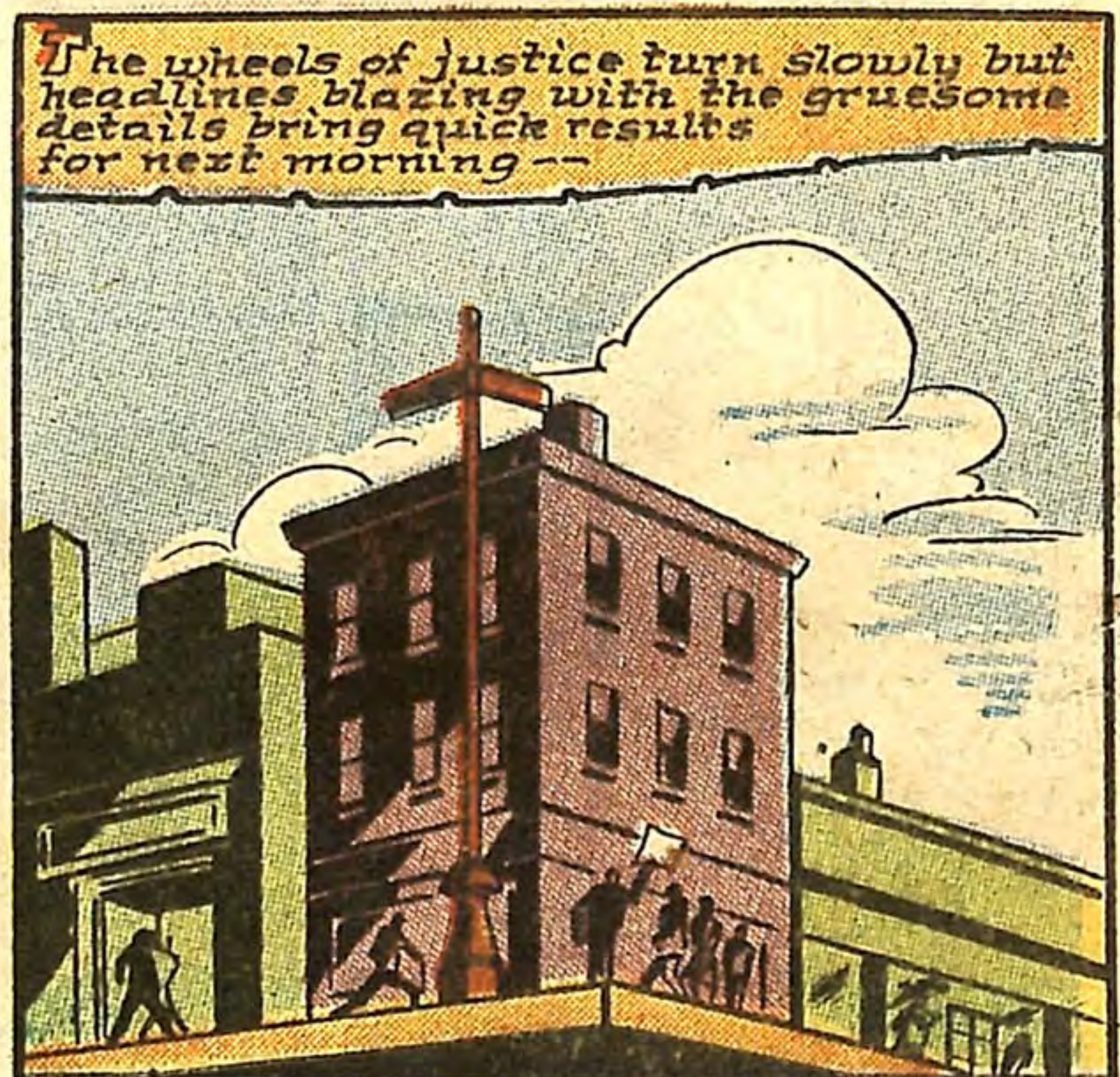
JOSEPH BELL

(My Commission Expires on March 30, 1947)

CALLING ALL CARS



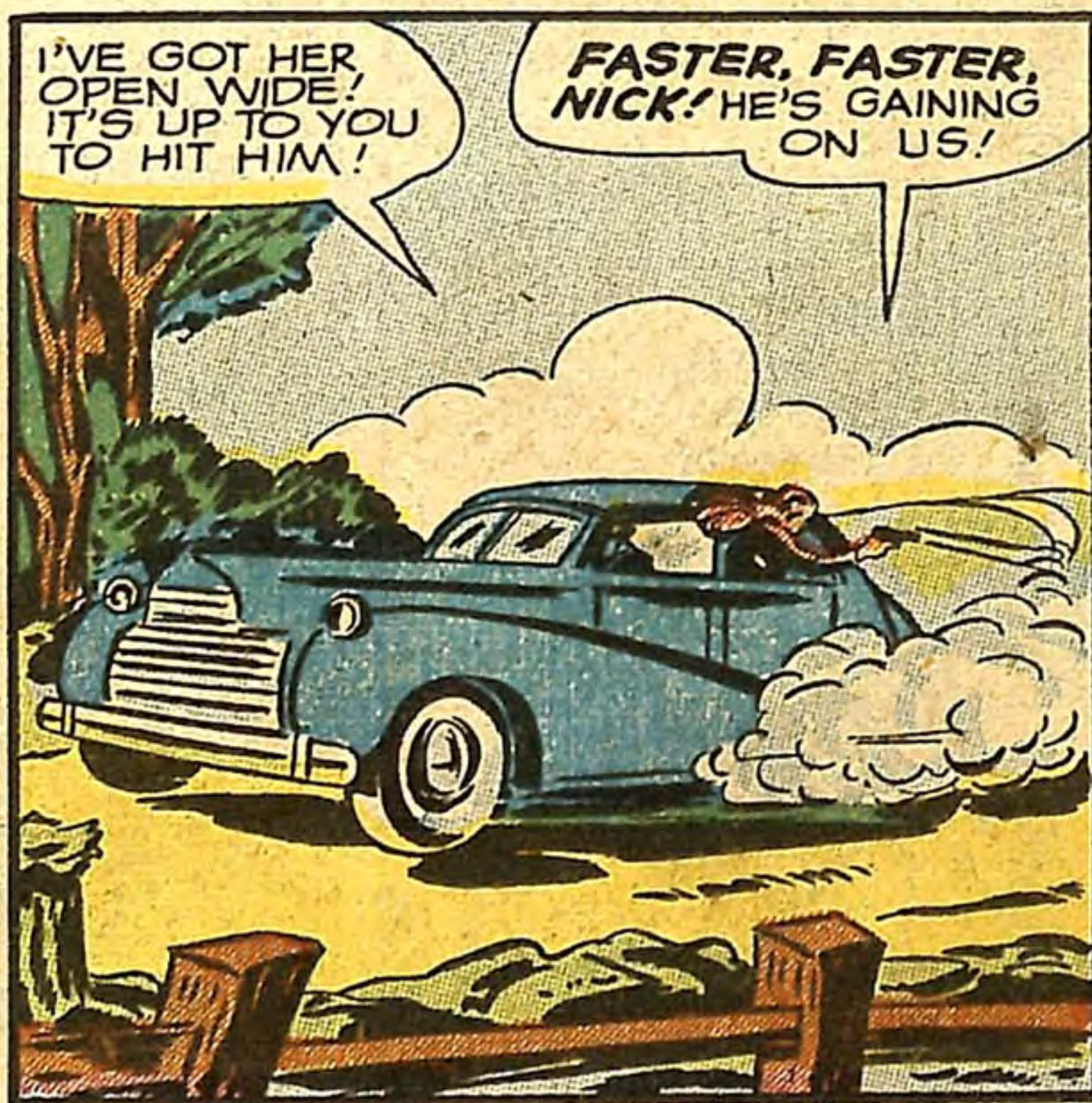




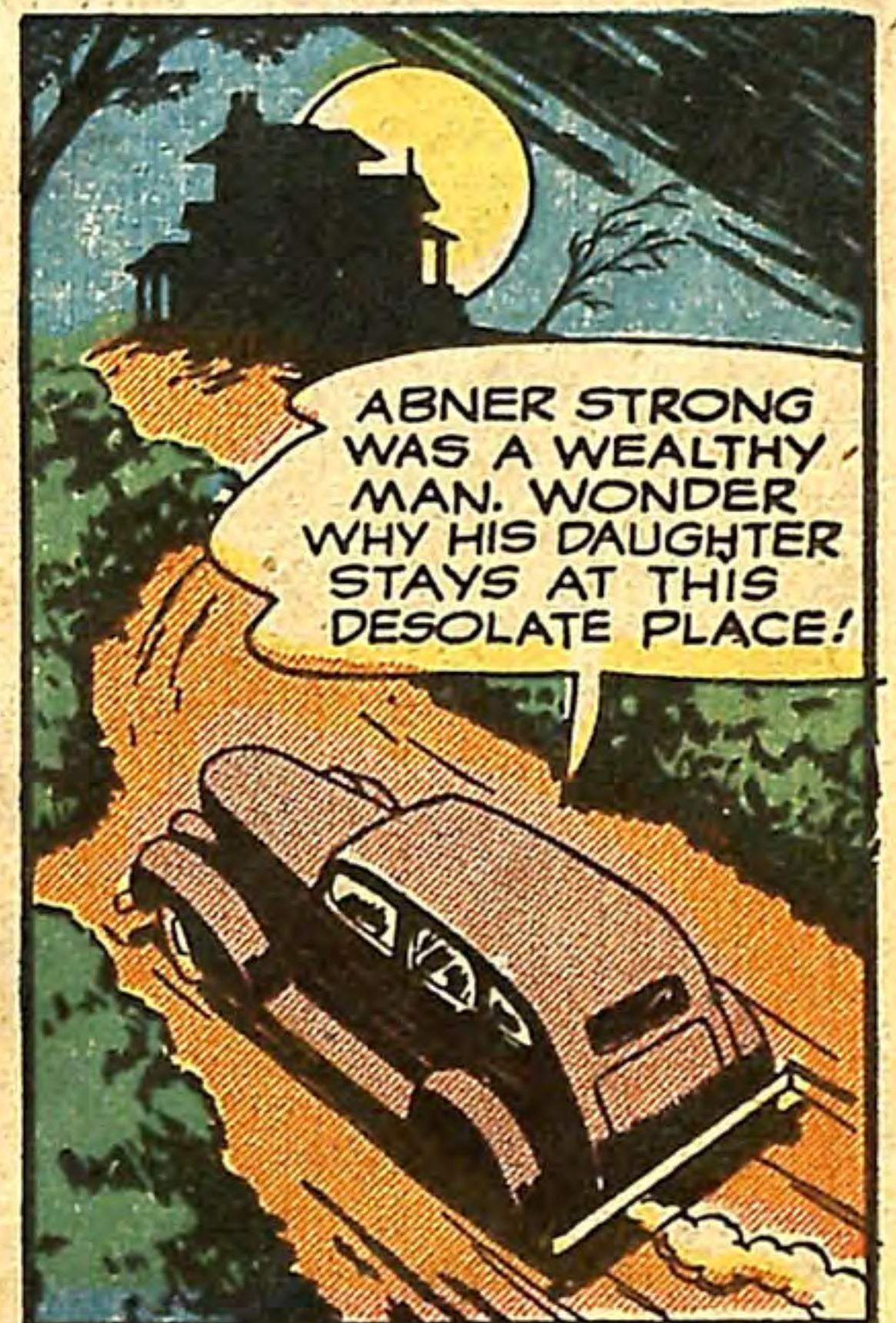


For a hectic half hour, the detectives fire questions at the bewildered man.





LADY SATAN











SOON, SHE'LL
SEE HER
FATHER
AGAIN!

VERY SOON,
VERY SOON,
INDEED!



HURRY!
SHE'S
COMING
TO!

IT IS DONE. NOW
WE'LL INTRODUCE
HER TO HER FATHER!



HERE'S YOUR
FATHER, NANCY.
WHAT'S LEFT OF
HIM. HE REFUSED
TO TELL US WHERE
HE HID HIS MONEY!



BUT YOU SHOWED
US -- WHAT?
YOU'RE **NOT**
NANCY! YOU'RE
LADY SATAN!

YES,
AND NOW
YOU'LL
FEEL
BUT NOT
SEE THE
GHOST OF
YOUR
VICTIM!



IT IS THE POWDER
OF THE DRAGON'S
SCALES! IT
UNVEILS THE
SHADOW
WORLD!

WHAT?
MY EYES!
MY EYES!



ABNER STRONG!
GO AWAY!
GO AWAY!

HE'S COME BACK
FROM THE DEAD!
COMING TO CLAIM
OUR SOULS!



MY MAGIC GIVES
ME THE STRENGTH
OF TWENTY MEN--
GOOD, THE RING
IS LOOSENING!



HE'S ONLY A
SHADOW! HE
CAN'T HURT
US, BUT **LOOK!**

LADY
SATAN'S
FREE!



**YOU WON'T
ESCAPE!
--YOU WON'T!**



**BACK-- SPAWN
OF EVIL--
BACK!**

**NO!
NO!
STOP!**



**TAKE HER
AWAY! TAKE
HER AWAY!
HELP!**



**REBECCA!
SPEAK TO ME!
SHE--SHE'S DYING!
YOU'VE KILLED HER!**



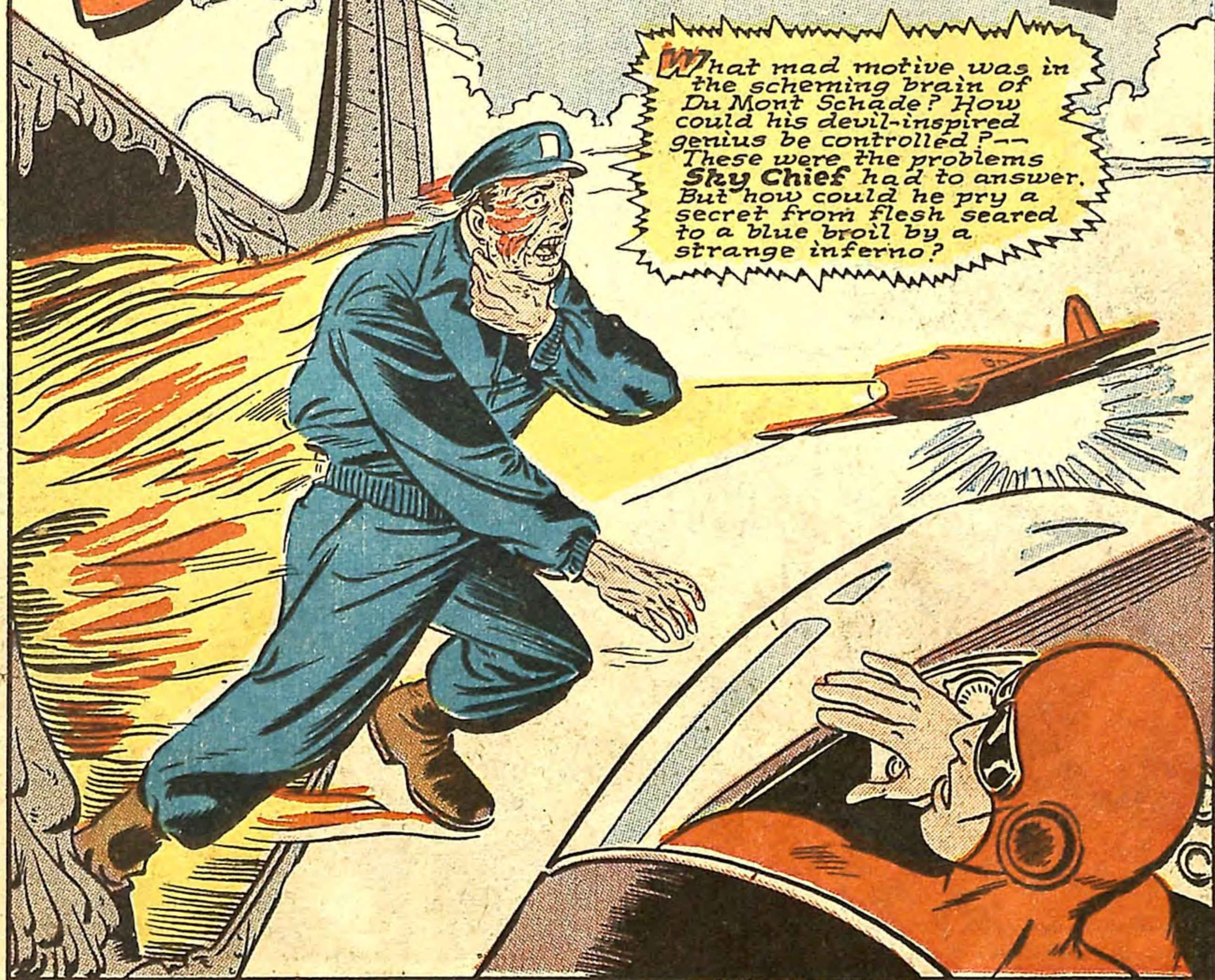
**YOU'VE HAD YOUR REVENGE,
MR. STRONG. ALL THAT
REMAINS IS FOR NANCY
TO OVERCOME HER GRIEF!**

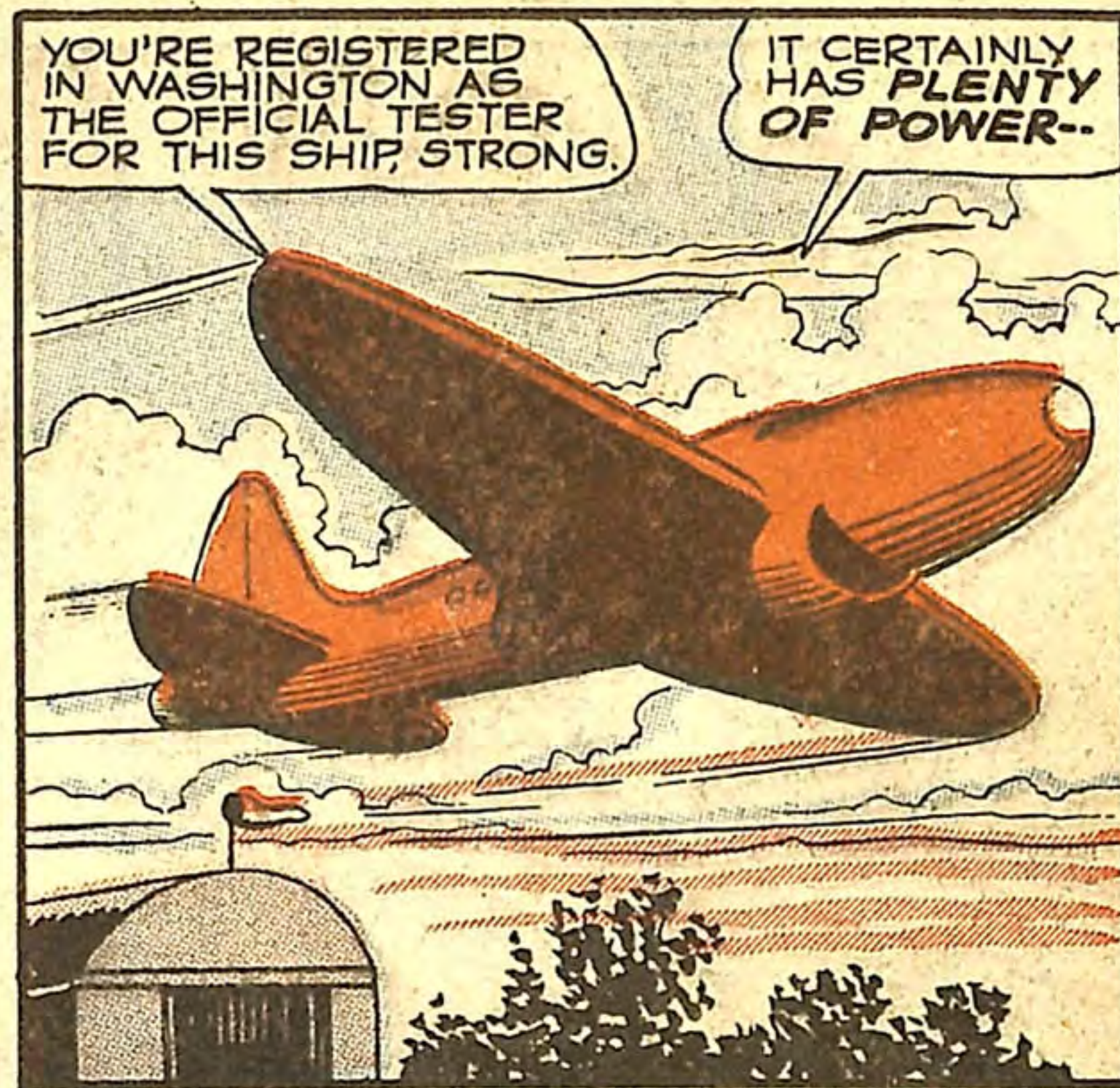


**HERE, NANCY, HERE'S
YOUR MONEY. YOUR
FATHER'S SPIRIT
SHOWED ME
WHERE IT
WAS HIDDEN!**

**THAT'S STRANGE! I
WONDER WHY I
COULDN'T SEE
HIM. YOU MUST
HAVE REMARKABLE
EYES. LADY SATAN!**

SKY CHIEF





That evening in his private hangar, Burton Strong becomes Sky Chief.

I GOT YOUR TELEPHONE MESSAGE, SKY CHIEF! WHAT'S UP?

GET THE SKY SHIP OUT, ED. WE'RE FLYING TO THE SUPER-JET PLANT!

WHY ARE WE LANDING OUT HERE IN THE STICKS, SKY CHIEF?

I WANT TO MAKE A **SECRET INSPECTION** OF THE SUPER-JET PLANE I OKAYED THIS AFTERNOON--

After a short hop--

THIS SKELETON KEY FITS THE LOCK. ONE SLIP AND WE'RE IN PLENTY OF TROUBLE, SO **BE CAREFUL!**

SURE WISH LINDA HADN'T INSISTED ON COMING ALONG!

THERE SEEMS TO BE NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT THIS SUPER-JET--

WAIT-- ED! HERE'S A **SWITCH** UNDER THE DASH. WONDER WHY IT'S **HIDDEN?**

Meanwhile--

BEFORE FILING THESE PAPERS AT WASHINGTON I WISH I COULD **SMASH UP** ANOTHER BARKER TRANSPORT TO DRIVE HOME MY ARGUMENT, KRAMER!

WHY NOT, SCHADE? THEIR **SOUTHERN BELLE** FLIES OVER IN A HALF HOUR!

At that moment--

GOOD GRIEF, KRAMER! SOMEONE'S AT THE SUPER-JET!

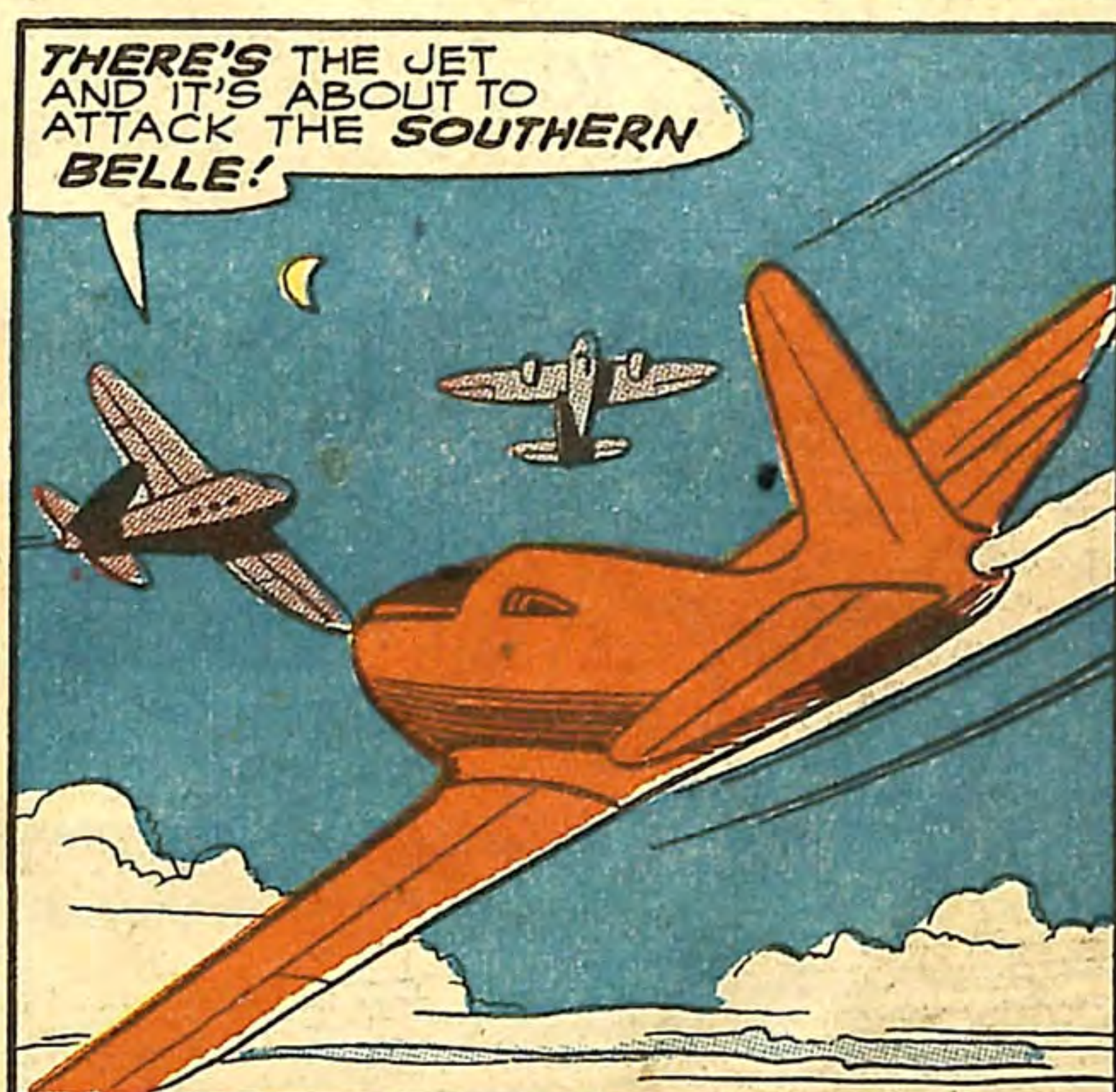
SPTRR-- CRACKLE

GET THE BOYS! SURROUND THE PLACE!

I HAVE A HUNCH **STRONG'S** DOING THIS! WE'VE GOT TO **NAB** HIM!

IF HE GETS AWAY, SCHADE, WE'RE **WASHED UP!**







HELP ME! HELP ME!
I'M BURNING!
EXPLODING!



AHG!

SEE, MY DEAR?
THERE IS NO ESCAPE
FROM MY POWERFUL
RAY CANNON!

YOU BEAST!
OH, IF SKY
CHIEF WERE
HERE, YOU
WOULDN'T--

SKY
CHIEF!
AND I CAN'T
CHANGE
COURSE AT
THIS SPEED!
YOU KNEW!

RIGHT!
AND IF WE
GO DOWN
WITH YOU,
IT WILL
BE WORTH
DYING!



I CAN CONTROL THE
SKY SHIP BETTER THAN
SCHADE CAN THE JET
PLANE! I'LL SET THE
ELECTRIC GYRO
AND PRAY!



THIS IS WHERE
I TAKE OVER,
SCHADE!

YOU'LL TAKE A
WRENCH OVER
THE HEAD!



THANK
HEAVENS,
SKY CHIEF!

UNTIE ED
MC KAIL,
LINDA! I'LL
HANDLE
SCHADE FROM
HERE IN!



THERE GOES
SCHADE-- HE'LL
MURDER NO
MORE TO
SATISFY
HIS GREED!

THANKS,
SKY CHIEF!
I SURE
NEVER
HOPED TO
SEE YOU
AGAIN!



Next morning--

ON THE QUIET,
BURT! WHY
DIDN'T THE
SKY SHIP
CRASH?

I TUNED TO
THE RADIO
BEAM AT
MY HANGAR
BEFORE I
JUMPED. THE
SHIP CAME IN BY
REMOTE CONTROL!
BUT, SH-H-H!
SCHOOL'S IN!

STAND-IN FOR A CORPSE

MURDER ISN'T A SPORT FOR AMATEURS

Until a spinal infection had crippled Henrietta Bedloe's left leg no one had been able to distinguish between her and her twin sister, Maria. Maria now had been dead a year, buried by the river in the little cemetery. And Henrietta had been married almost as long a time to Dr. Thomas Moreland, twenty years her junior.

By the will of Cyrus Bedloe, father of the twins, Henrietta, the crippled one, received the bulk of his ample estate, with a proviso that Henrietta should support Maria as long as she should live unmarried.

It was not the narrow, cruel tenets of the will, though, that bothered Ed Lesser, the Public Health Commissioner, but Henrietta's sentiment.

"Henrietta's as stubborn as a mule," Lesser said to Detective Frank Finney. "Maria's was the only grave to be dug in the old burial ground in the past fifty years. The town wants to move the body up on the hill to the new cemetery so the river won't be washin' her bones. There's bathin' below in the river and some of the townspeople are squeamish about it now that the river has overflowed twice lately. That's why I called you in."

"My father worked for Old Man Bedloe a good many years," Finney said, "and Henrietta always liked me. Glad it's Henrietta and not Maria I've got to convince, though. Maria was mean and used to sock me when she could get away with it. Maria had a grip like a vise. Athletic type."

Dr. Moreland, Henrietta's husband, let Finney into the old mansion. Moreland was big, over six feet tall and weighed in the neighborhood of two hundred. He was about thirty-five.

Finney found Henrietta in a wheelchair. She reached out and took Finney's hand in both of hers.

"It's nice to see you, Frank," she said, her voice cracking and rather high-pitched.

"I came about the cemetery, Henrietta," Finney said.

The woman's jaw clamped tight. Henrietta shook her head. "It's no use and if that's all you came for, Dr. Moreland will show you out," she said.

Downstairs Finney remarked, "It's been a long time since I've been on the place, Dr. Moreland. Mind if I look around?"

Finney went outside and down the hatchway to the dank cellar. Memories not altogether

pleasant crowded through his mind. Many a winter night he had worked long and hard trying to get heat from the old hot-air furnace, with its clogged and smoky pipes and inadequate drafts.

Twenty minutes later Finney returned from the cellar and walked to the street. He waited casually back of a clump of shrubbery, watched patiently. Suddenly he hurried back toward the house, rushed inside without knocking and bumped hard into Moreland who was getting out fast. Finney was ready and kept his balance, but Moreland spilled, fell backward to the floor.

A motion at the head of the stairs caught Finney's eye. He raised his head. Moreland saw the division of attention. He rose and sprang at Finney. Finney came back with a right that sent Moreland sprawling again. The detective dove to follow up, but Moreland yanked out an automatic and fired.

The bullet grazed Finney's head, but he fell on the gun arm. Both grappled on the floor. Then Finney got in a punch first to Moreland's wind and then to his jaw. Moreland stiffened out and Finney got up.

"Okay," Finney called up the stairway, "come on down, Maria!"

Maria Bedloe, her head held high, stepped proudly down the carpeted stairs.

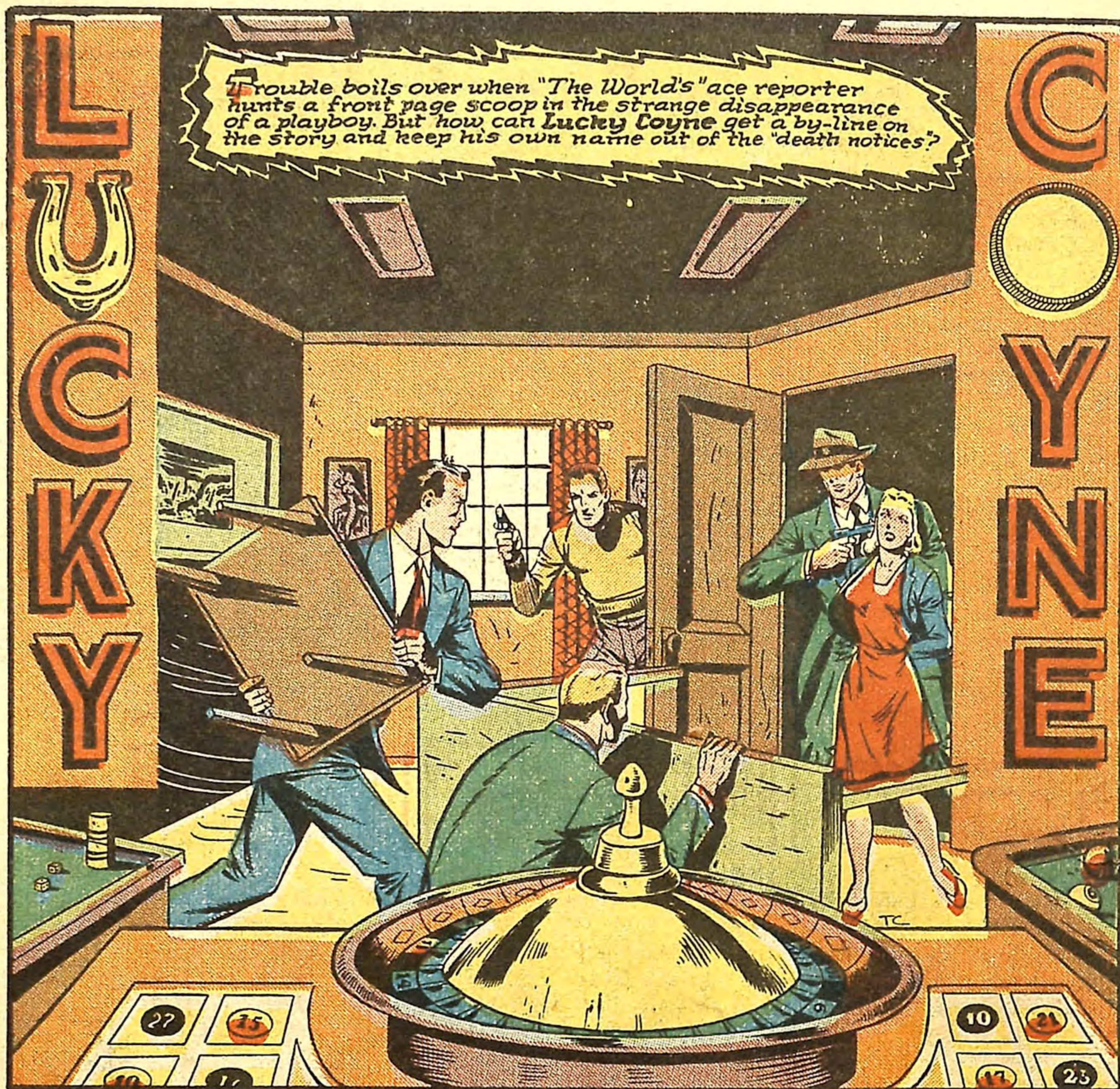
"I'm glad it's over," she said.

Ed Lesser was waiting with the Chief at headquarters.

"All my life," confessed Maria, "I waited on Henrietta. When the Doctor began courting her I knew it was for her money. One night I gave Henrietta a sleeping pill and put her into my bed. I took her place and suggested Dr. Moreland do something about my sister. Dr. Moreland gave 'Maria' a hypodermic injection from which she never recovered. When Dr. Moreland found out his mistake it was too late, for he, too, was involved. Thus I got the estate *and* the Doctor."

Later Ed Lesser shook his head wonderingly. "How did you get wise, Frank?" he asked.

"I was sure when she shook my hand she was Maria. I KNOW that grip! So I started a furnace fire. From past experience I was certain the fire would send smoke through the house. Maria and Doc thought it was the house burning. Moreland was taking a powder to save his own skin. Maria—well, I just smoked her out!"



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WELL, IT'S FIVE O'CLOCK! **HEADS** WE ALL GO DOWN FOR A CUP OF JAVA—

TAILS! BUT WAIT—LUCKY! THE CHIEF IS CALLING YOU!

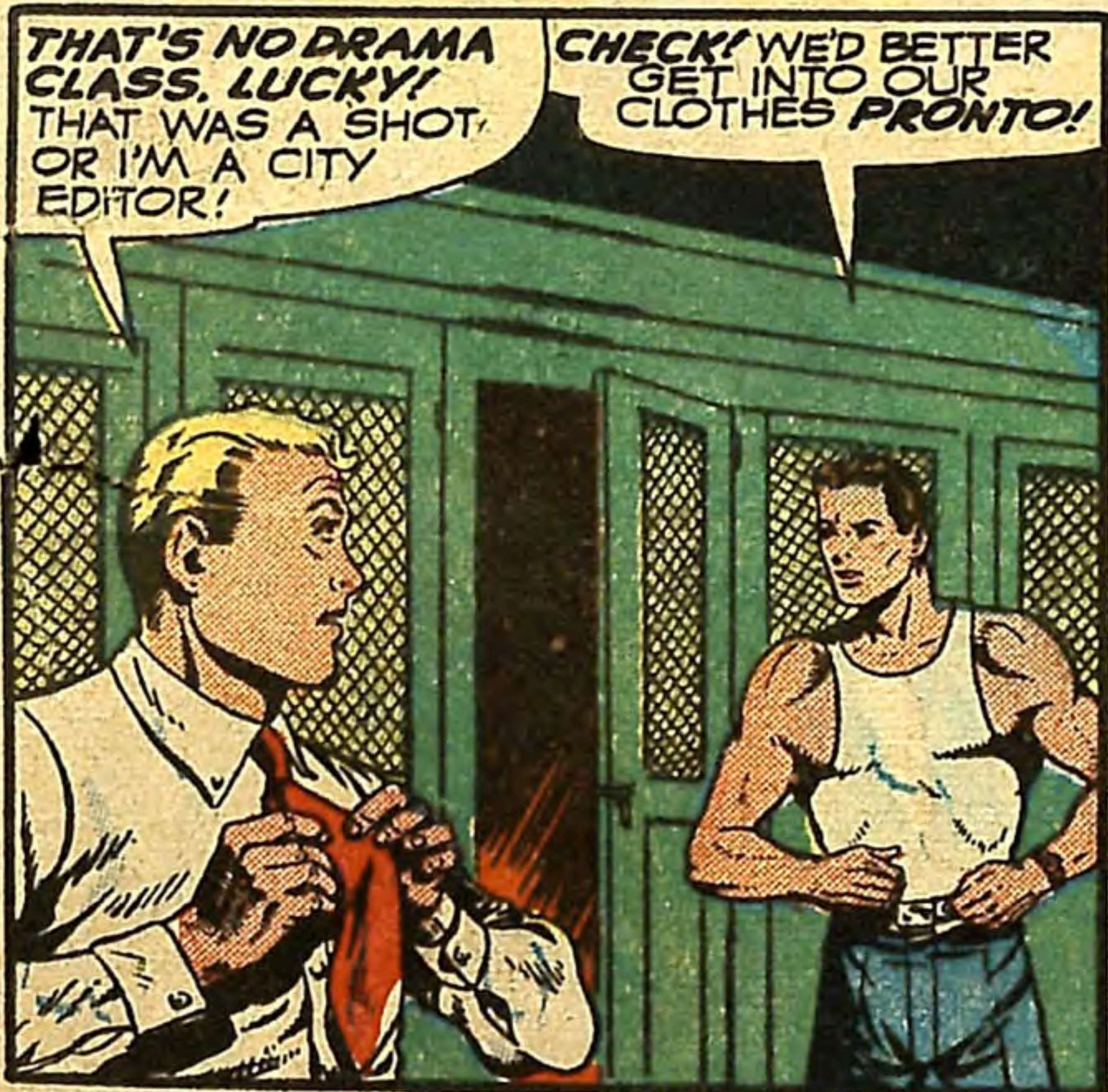


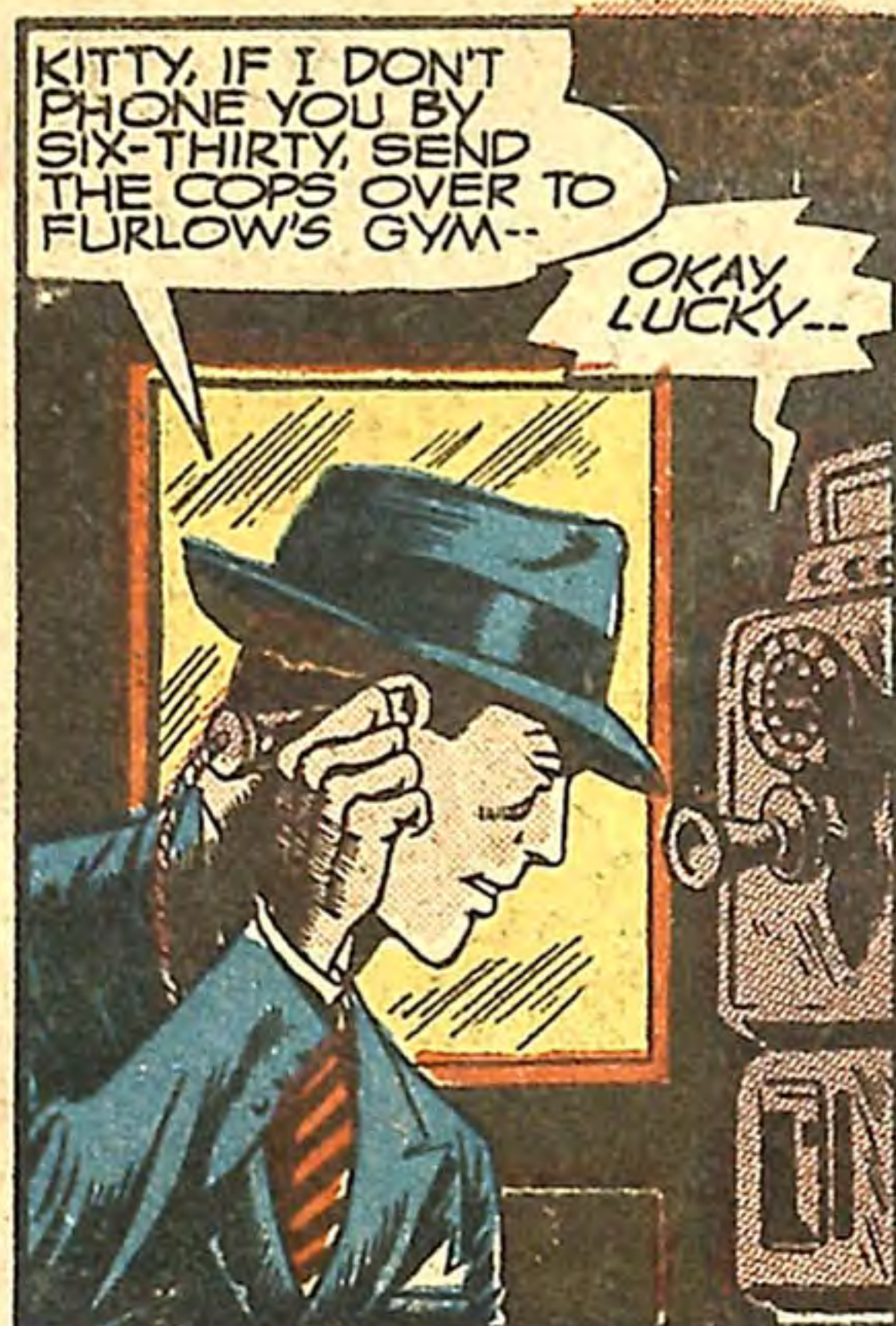
A few minutes later—

LET'S GO, TERRY! **WE'VE GOT TO FIND WHY RICHARD RICE III DISAPPEARED!**

SCRAM, YOU TWO! I HAVE TO WORK OVERTIME ON ADVICE TO THE LOVELORN!









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